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RECOLLECTIONS



OF A SAILOR.

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For the use of the young  
Members of the College  
from which passed the  
Author who has a  
Pleasant "Recollection"  
of a visit he paid to that the  
Institution when he was a  
Tailor Boy



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# RECOLLECTIONS

OF A

## SAILOR.

*By William Schaw Lindsay*

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"Now would I give a thousand furlongs at sea for an acre of barren ground."—*Tempest*.

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PART I.

CRUISE OF THE "ARETHUSA."

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## P R E F A C E.



**T**HE following pages, containing "The Recollections of a Sailor," were written by the Author as a relief from literary work of a more arduous and important character connected with the same subject—the Sea.

They have answered the object for which they were originally penned. As they have been not altogether unacceptable to the readers of the *Nautical Magazine*, where they first, and only very recently, appeared, the Author is induced to republish them in the hope that they may be at least equally so to the general public.

If the anticipation of the future be pleasant, and it is often more pleasant than the realisation, the recollections of past labours are not less agreeable.

With what anxiety the boy looks forward to manhood, little knowing the labour and trouble it entails. With the hope that he may learn something from the following pages, which may be more useful to him in his progress through life than

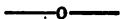


much of the light literature of the present day, the Author casts his crumbs of bread upon the waters ; and if only a very small portion of the public are fed upon them, the other object which the Author now has in view will also be attained.

*December, 1876.*



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# RECOLLECTIONS OF A SAILOR.

## CRUISE OF THE "ARETHUSA."

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### CHAPTER I.

#### MYSELF AND MY SISTER KATE.

**I** WAS about to begin my narrative by stating that I recollect it blew a furious gale on the early morning of my birth, but as my readers might think, however precocious I may have been as a child, these recollections could not carry me just so far back as the time when I was launched, I must correct myself by remarking that our family circle used to tell me so often of the awful storm which then raged ~~that~~ it has ever since been as vividly impressed ~~on~~ my recollection as it would have been had I known all about it from my own knowledge. But had I commenced with so great a blunder, I should only have exemplified for the thousandth time one of the failings of our frail humanity.

Everybody must have met people who, having

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heard an incident repeatedly related, were apt to believe that it came within their own observation ; and almost every day of our lives we meet with men who think they have performed some remarkable feat, and relate its performance so frequently and circumstantially that in the long run they believe it to be true, although it never had any existence. That my birth was a fact, there can, however, be no doubt ; although my own recollections about it must be very questionable.

Therefore, as I desire to be strictly accurate throughout, I shall give the circumstances of this important event as told to me by my sister Kate, who was a young lady, or a girl, just as people like to call her, of great veracity.

Kate had more to do with me than any other member of the family ; by her hands I was washed and dressed, and sometimes cuffed, but only when I thoroughly deserved it—which I frequently did—for she was the gentlest of creatures ; and she, too, cut out, sewed, and fitted on me my first inexpressibles.

The manse—our father's home—stood not far from the brink of a high cliff overlooking the sea. An old ivy-clad castle, whose "Laird" had allowed a portion of the stones of its ruined walls to be used by the parishioners for the erection of the manse, was within fifty yards of it ; and the house when

finished was presented to my father, their minister, on his marriage, some seventeen years before I was born.

The parishioners were chiefly owners of small coasting vessels, and fishermen; hardy and industrious men, but very poor. They had, however, managed, partly by subscriptions and partly by their own labour, to build for my parents a substantial two-storied house. This granite-built manse, which had up to that time effectually resisted every gale, lost all its chimney-pots, and had two of its windows blown in, on the eventful morning of my birth.

I was the youngest of eight children, and as my father's stipend was only £100 per annum, hardly sufficient to make the two ends meet when there were fewer mouths to fill, it was not to be expected that I should be welcomed into life with any marked rejoicings. But "the gale it whistled, the tempest rolled, and the dolphins bared their backs of gold," just as they appear to have done according to the old song; and there never was heard such an "outcry wild" as, on this special occasion, ushered to life, if it did not welcome, another "ocean's child."

The day and date of this important event cannot be a matter of any consequence to my readers, but it must have occurred during the depth of winter, for Kate frequently told me that when the window



of my mother's bedroom blew in, the sleet and snow were driven by the hurricane right upon the bed where she lay, and all but brought to a very premature conclusion my own existence. To make matters worse, I had come into the world sooner than was expected, and there was no doctor in attendance—a matter, perhaps, not for regret, as the village midwife did quite as well, and at much less cost.

But the awful gale, my premature appearance, and the absence of the doctor combined, made such a lasting impression on the inmates of the manse, and were so frequently talked about in our family circle, that it is not surprising I should have regarded these events as within my own recollection. My own actual remembrances, however, extend very vividly to the time when Kate dressed me for the first time in a suit of blue flannel cloth, her own handiwork, made, I suspect, from the same roll of stuff which had supplied her and her sisters with their winter petticoats. But the suit, such as it was, was wonderfully gratifying to me, for I now resembled the sailors and fishermen amongst whom it had been my delight to mingle. My trousers, I recollect, were wide, straight in the legs, just like theirs; and with the small loose jacket of the same material, I was every inch a sailor before I had reached the mature age of five years.

My mother was a thorough economist. She had need to be, poor body, with her large family and limited means ; and Kate's mode of rigging me gave her great satisfaction. Mother and son were, therefore, equally satisfied, with her handiwork, the former more so, for she then knew what I did not—that the blue flannel came not merely from the same roll as the petticoats, but had been used for the petticoats before it had been "made down" into my first suit of jacket and trousers.

#### MY FATHER, OUR KIRK MANSE AND VILLAGE.

My father was the most generous-hearted of men—as fine a specimen of the old school of Presbyterians as ever I knew, and one of those grand but humble men who would have sacrificed his life for the maintenance of his religious independence as readily as his forefathers had done before him during the massacre of Glencoe. I recollect him, as distinctly as if it had been yesterday, walking down on a Sabbath morning from the manse on the cliff to his place of public worship at the end of the little valley, where it stood in the centre of the village on the beach, near the base of a low shelving promontory ; with his black gown and cambric "bands," and the villagers turning out to bow or curtsy to him as he passed on his way to the "kirk." Nor can I

ever forget his sermons. They were the beautiful but simple doctrines taught by the founders of the Christian faith, and were propounded by an eloquence from the heart, of which we have now too few examples.

Although the manse was one of the plainest and roughest of buildings, the ground attached to it, sloping down into a sheltered valley, was a lovely spot—a remarkable contrast to the barren cliff behind, on which the manse itself had been erected. Sheltered from the north-east winds, the garden produced not merely all the vegetables requisite for the family wants, but fruit in abundance; while it was stored with evergreens, especially the rhododendron, and contained many of the prettiest and sweetest of our southern plants.

The path which led from the wicket-gate at the lower end of the garden to the village and the kirk, was so thoroughly sheltered from the sea and winds that beautiful wild flowers grew about it in great luxuriance and abundance. Nor was the village itself unworthy of notice. Unlike most of the fishing towns on the Scotch seaboard, where the houses stand ranged along an open beach, there was before our town a small island, forming with the peninsula the harbour, which afforded shelter sufficient to allow the trees behind, and within one part of our village,

to grow to a much greater height than is usually the case on the seacoast.

The tallest and most luxuriant of these were to be found around the "kirk yard:" and over many of the moss-covered tombstones there had grown small though graceful weeping willows. The kirk itself, with its ivy-covered tower, had been built, for more than a century, out of granite rock and some of the large pebbles found on the beach; these having been cemented together by lime made from sea-shells, its walls were destined to endure almost as long as the rocks from which their stones had been hewn.

It was the only place of worship in the village, but though it contained room for nearly all the inhabitants it was always full—the village itself being almost entirely deserted during the hours occupied in the morning and afternoon services. In the evening, the best educated of the young men and women, including my eldest sister, Mary, taught Sunday schools; and when the hours of attendance were over, family prayers might be heard in every household. I recollect that on these occasions the villagers' songs of praise, though not so beautiful and melodious, sounded in my boyish ears far sweeter than the music I have since frequently listened to in many gorgeous cathedrals.

In the manse no cooking was allowed on the Sabbath day beyond boiling the pot for the children's porridge and heating a kettle of water for breakfast and tea. Everything else had been prepared the previous day. It is true that, with a stipend of only £100 a-year, and ten people to feed, clothe, and educate out of that modest sum, we could not expect much else : but had our means permitted more substantial or dainty dishes, neither roasts nor stews would have been allowed to be cooked within the manse on the day set apart for rest and prayer. Nevertheless, although we had not much on any day beyond oatmeal prepared in different forms, vegetables, broth, and sometimes boiled beef—one day hot, the others cold—we had now and again a “hen,” after it had lived too long to lay any more eggs ; and there were plenty of mackerel and herring when the weather was favourable. Besides, the fishermen frequently brought to us “Solán” geese when they were in season from Isla-Craig, so that we had enough for all the comforts, and at Sacrament time could provide some of the luxuries, of life : thus by adapting our expenditure to our means, we were “passing rich” on £100 a-year.

Nor were my brothers and sisters ever shabily or scantily clothed. Indeed Kate, who was my favourite sister, and who was just springing into womanhood

when I was first attired in the trousers of her make, had few to equal her in the neatness of her attire. The Laird's daughters could not match her in the grace, and I might say elegance of her Sunday dress, though far less expensive. But Kate was one of Nature's beauties, and although every article she wore was of her own making-up and of the cheapest materials, the finest lady in the land could not have made herself more genuinely attractive than she. Then, Kate was not merely an apt scholar and expert sempstress, she was likewise a good housekeeper and capital cook. She could boil our porridge and make our oatmeal cakes to perfection. Nor were the manufacture of rolls, currant buns, cookies, and short-bread beyond her reach. Tough old hens, and tougher cocks, became tender under her manipulation; and even Solan geese were deprived of much of their rank flavour and oily taste by her knowledge of the art of cookery.

What a fine wife and mother Kate would have made, compared to those young women of the present day who wear cockatoo hats, and close-reefed skirts; and with studding sails at their sterns, flirt on "rinks" all day long, instead of learning how to "keep house!" No wonder that "professed cooks" are saucy when young mistresses are ignorant; nor need we be surprised that homes

are miserable, and husbands too frequently ruined by extravagant and handless wives.

KATE GOES IN SEARCH OF WILD FLOWERS.

But, alas ! Kate never became a wife. Amongst her other accomplishments she had picked up the art of painting, and when not otherwise employed, devoted her spare hours to drawing and colouring flowers from Nature. I was old enough to recollect that some of these were very pretty ; but I did not then know that they found a ready market in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and that the proceeds, not merely provided her with the dresses she wore, but left something over to give away to the poor of the village. Her favourite sketches were made from ferns and wild flowers ; and her long walks in search of them afforded her health and recreation. Frequently she would be away for hours together, wandering along the cliffs and through the gullies and glens to find a fern with a peculiar leaf, or a wild flower of unusually variegated colour ; and though she sometimes did not return to the manse until after sunset, she was always back in time for family prayers, so that her long wanderings never gave our father or mother any uneasiness.

But one summer evening Kate did not make her appearance at family worship, and I could see by

my father's countenance that he was a good deal disconcerted. Prayers were delayed half-an-hour longer than usual in the hope, and, indeed, full expectation, that she would by that time have returned to the manse; but when the family had assembled for worship, and my father saw that there was a spare Bible on the table, and that Kate's chair was empty, he asked very uneasily if she had not returned, and if anyone knew in what direction she had strolled that evening.

Through a branch of the small valley I have described there ran a small but rapid trout stream, which had its chief source of supply from a deep pool about five miles distant from the manse. The pool itself derived its own supply of water from various still smaller rivulets, which were dry in summer, except after heavy rains, when they fell in little cascades over the low but somewhat precipitous cliffs, which formed three sides of the pool.

It was a lonely but beautiful spot, and when the upper streams overflowed and formed miniature waterfalls, gurgling through the stunted trees, brushwood, and innumerable wild flowers, and over rocky channels, there were few places, even in the highlands of my own rugged but grand fatherland, which could afford more pleasure to the lover of Nature, or more variety, corresponding with its



extent and scope, for the pencil of the artist or the theme of the poet. My recollections of the spot are now as clear and vivid as if I had visited it yesterday. From the pool to its estuary at the small bay forming the harbour, I was familiar with every rock and almost every pebble that lined or impeded the gurgling stream. On many of the rocks I had frequently sat for hours, watching the trout as they frolicked amongst the stones, skimming through some silvery rivulet, or pouncing out of the water to catch a fly which had placed itself within the reach of temptation, and then diving with its prey to a deep hiding-place under the lee of one of the larger pebbles.

But I must go back to the story of my sister Kate. I have said that one evening at prayer-time she was missing.

Prayers concluded, and Kate not having made her appearance, we all became anxious about her ; my father and mother nervously so ; and no one thought of going to bed until she came home. But dear, dear sister Kate never came home again. We all sat for an hour after family prayers, in foreboding silence ; and as time wore on, our anxiety and suspense increased in intensity. At last, when the old Hall clock struck the midnight hour, in tones seemingly more loud and solemn than ever it had

done before, my father rose from his chair, and beckoning my eldest brother Peter to him (who, employed in the drapery establishment of a neighbouring town was then at home for his holidays), half whispered in his ear, "Peter, I am getting very uneasy about Kate." His lips quivered as he spoke, and his hand trembled as he pulled the spectacles from his eyes—for his Bible was still on the table before him, though he had evidently not been reading much during the last half-hour.

"Peter," he continued, his hand trembling still more as he put his glasses into their case, "Something serious must have happened to Kate, or she would have been home long ere this." And, we were all anxious, as none of us knew in what direction she had gone. Then, turning to my mother, he remarked that she would better not think of waiting up for her any longer, and that he and Peter would walk down to the village, and inquire of one of the Kirk elders about her, with whose family Kate sometimes spent an evening.

But though my mother sent the younger members of the family to bed, an order they reluctantly obeyed, and did not sleep when they got there, she would not go to bed herself, and insisted on sitting up until her husband returned from his inquiries in the village.

## KATE NEVER RETURNS.

I was then a boy in the tenth year of my age, and, though the youngest in the family, I resolved to accompany my father and Peter. Kate was my darling sister. She had nursed me, and washed me, and clothed me. She had, indeed, been more than a mother to me, for though my mother was a kind-hearted woman, her attention had been more directed to household matters, and to the training and education of the older branches of the family than to myself, in which she was assisted by my eldest sister, Mary, leaving Kate, who was next to Mary, to look after me, which she had done from my infancy.

"Let me go with you and Peter. Pray do let me go!" I said, almost imploringly, to my father. "I think something serious has happened to dear Kate, or she would have been home long ere this." Young as I was, I had my forebodings. I knew even then the danger of wandering about the low banks of some portions of the stream or "burn;" and knowing that though her favourite walk was along its banks, she sometimes went as far as the large pool, where the banks, being very steep, were consequently more dangerous, a feeling had caught hold of my young mind that something serious had happened to her.

I did not venture to tell my father what I thought, but when he reluctantly allowed me to accompany him and my brother Peter, the fear was deeply impressed on my mind that my dear sister, while in search for wild flowers, had slipped from the high banks and been drowned in the pool.

When we reached the Elder's house, all the members of it had gone to rest for the night, and there was the most perfect solitude in the village. Indeed, we did not meet a single person on our way, although his house was situated at the extreme end or close to the beach. Its inmates were deeply interested, but knew nothing about Kate, except that she had been there in the forenoon, and had incidentally remarked that she intended "after tea" to take a walk along the burn as far as the pool, in search of a particular description of fern of which one of the Elder's daughters had shown her an incomplete and imperfect specimen.

We thus obtained a clue to our further search; and as the moon was at its full, and as the long summer evening favoured our walk in that direction, we traced the source of the stream to its source at the pool. But our labours proved of no avail. Although we called at many of the cottages on its banks where my father was intimate with their inmates, and roused them from their sleep, none of

them, though all were ready to lend a helping hand, could tell us anything about Kate, except a farm boy, who said that he had seen "Miss Katherine" when returning from his work, after six o'clock the previous evening, walking towards the falls.

The direction she had taken was now clear to us. We resumed our search with renewed vigour, but with the most sad and gloomy forebodings. However, no further trace of her could be found, and we returned to the manse about five in the morning still hoping to find her there.

My mother was seated in the room where we had left her. My three sisters (my other brother, Alexander, who was a clerk in an office at Glasgow, and a younger brother, Jamie, were absent) left their bedrooms whenever they heard our knock at the door, intensely interested to know if Kate had been found. But when it was seen that Kate was not with us they gave way to despair. Hope, which clings to us like some living, invigorating messenger of comfort, when everything else has gone, seemed on that occasion to have vanished. The manse that sad morning was as full of the lamentations for the dead as if Kate had left us for ever. And so she had—although two days elapsed before any confirmation of her melancholy fate reached us. Her continued absence and the fore-

bodings of her fate spread with lightning speed throughout the neighbourhood, and especially in the village where she been so great a favourite. The whole district felt interested. Every villager seemed to have lost a friend. Many of the fishermen ceased their occupation that morning to go and search for poor Kate. Most of them had known her from childhood; she had taught their children, and had frequently been a consoling angel to their wives when death or even when minor afflictions had visited their humble homes. The young men, too, of the better classes, more than one of whom had been made happy by her smiles, if they could not hope for her affection, joined in the search. Mothers and daughters—for not one of them had ever been jealous of her—lent a hand in the search; while the master and all the schoolboys of the little academy, where I was then having my education, forsook their duties for the day to assist in the discovery.

But though the fishermen spread their nets in the "big pool," and searched every nook of the stream from its source to the sea, and even along the small bay, their exertions were of no avail. Messengers were sent to the neighbouring towns, and every valley was explored, but all in vain.

The second night in the manse was one of still deeper despair, and earnest were the prayers that

evening of my good old father that God would restore to him his darling daughter. But the grave—be it in the earth, the lake, pool, river, or ocean—never gives up its dead to life again ; and all our researches had failed to find my dear sister in the land of the living.

Peter and I, with many of the villagers, continued our search during that long, long second night. Our father was too infirm and too broken-down to accompany us any great distance from the manse, but he wandered about the village and the banks of the burn, peering into every nook and crevice of the clear though rugged trout stream, in search of all that was mortal of his beloved daughter. This one thought, combined with resignation to whatever might be the inscrutable act of Providence in regard to his lost child, occupied his whole mind and soul. Though his reason in all other matters seemed to have for the time left him, he was still the man and still the Christian—two of the grandest feelings of our frail and ever-erring humanity remaining vigorous and clear—a father's affection for his child, and his duty to bow submissively to the will of God.

The second night's search proved equally futile. Great was the emotion and terrible the suspense, although still mingled with hope, which clouded

every mind that evening in the manse. More solemn were the prayers, but yet there was no repining, not even when the dawn of the morning of the third day brought no tidings of the lost one. But the day had not far advanced, when a group of men, carrying a burden on a stretcher, and winding their way up the narrow pathway which led to the manse, told the sad tale. Kate, when endeavouring to reach one of her favourite wild flowers on a precipitous portion of the steep banks which surrounded the pool, had fallen into the water, and had been drowned ! The stream then, much higher than usual in the summer season, had washed her body into a nook, below some overhanging brush-wood, nearly three miles from the place where, by the traces of her struggles, she had evidently fallen into the pool ; there her body had lain in shallow water for two nights and days unseen. But the body was as fresh as if it had been only a few hours immersed in the stream. One of its hands still grasped the wild flowers, and the countenance was as beautiful and placid in death as ever it had been in the full bloom and vigour of life. It still looked so like the loving, living reality, that when the rough, but warm-hearted fishermen, who had carried the body to the manse, laid it down to rest by the side of her own favourite flower-bed, on the little



lawn before the hall door, I threw my arms around the neck of all that was mortal of my dear sister, and felt that I should be glad to be laid by her side in the grave.

If there is one region beyond the grave brighter and fairer than another which our Great Creator has appropriated to the purest of those persons from earth who are to be for ever blessed, every one who knew my long lost sister Kate must feel with me that she has found her everlasting abode in the happiest of these glorious and imperishable worlds. And, if from amongst the best and fairest of our race God chooses angels to adorn that happy land, she must now be one of them.

## CHAPTER II.

I MORALISE, THEN DESPOND, AND THEN RESOLVE.

**I** SHALL not attempt to describe the scene in the manse when it became known that Kate was drowned, and that her body had been found. Although "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," no relief was afforded to the afflicted family circle from which the loved one had been so suddenly taken away, when there was no longer any doubt about the sad reality. She was gone, and gone for ever; and all that was left of her were those mortal remains, which however beautiful even in death, must soon be hurried from our sight.

One does not wonder that the ancient custom of embalming, to preserve the bodies of the dead, should have so long prevailed, for who could wish to hurry from their sight a form so lovely as that of my sister Kate as it lay on the lawn where the fishermen had gently laid it, amidst the flowers planted by her own hands? Tears might have afforded some relief to my parents, but neither wept. They were as pale and almost as motionless

as the body of their dead daughter; but their anguish was terrible. A look of the wildest despair blended however with resignation, was the only sign of my father's sorrow, although the heavings of my mother's breast, as if her heart was about to break, too plainly revealed her subdued anguish. My sisters found relief in floods of tears, while I, too young to understand the depths of a parent's sorrow, was surprised at their apparent calmness.

The grief of the villagers was second only to that of the inmates of the manse; and nearly the whole male population, including the Laird and his two sons, showed their respect for the memory of Kate by following her body to the grave. Nor was the grief of the women and children less conspicuous, for they gathered in groups round the kirkyard, many of them in tears, while all that was mortal of one whom they had loved was laid in its last resting-place; the little children sprinkling wild flowers—all they had—over the fresh mound of earth that marked her grave.

Kate's death created in me for some time afterwards a gloomy foreboding. I wondered why the Great Dispenser of events should have taken away one so young and beautiful, while the old, infirm, and useless were left in the enjoyment of life. What was the use, I thought, of striving to do good if all

our efforts were to be summarily cut short, as Kate's had been? And, what was the good of life if it was only to end in the grave? I could not then realise the consoling thought of life being only a pilgrimage, or state of preparation for one which was to endure for ever. I had already begun to philosophise about life and a state of things hereafter with an inclination, like too many youths of the present day, to repudiate everything in the Christian religion I could not understand; taking nothing for granted which could not be proved. But, as I grew older and wiser, I learned that there were many things, not merely in the doctrines of Christianity, but in nature itself, and especially in connection with life and reason, which were beyond the power of any man, however learned, to comprehend, and far beyond the reach of our limited senses and faculties. What, for instance, can the wisest of us know about Omnipotence or Omnipresence. And is it not as conceited and arrogant for us to deny their existence, as it would be for a race of blind men, who had never heard of men who could see, to repudiate the existence of such a sense as sight? Would not the fact of a small organ in the head, which reflected to the mind the knowledge and minute form of objects beyond our reach, be as incomprehensible to them as a Being of a higher

order than ourselves, whose senses embraced the knowledge of all our actions, and our most inward thoughts, is to us? Just as much. Yet, while we should laugh to scorn and denounce as incomprehensible idiots the race of beings with one sense less than ourselves who argued that sight was an absurdity, we too frequently repudiate the existence of a power or race of beings with more faculties and senses than we possess, simply because we cannot comprehend them any more than the blind man cannot understand the sense of seeing.

Are we not after all as ignorant as we are vain?

What do we know about those myriads of worlds floating in the azure and endless space above our heads, except that they are globes in density equal, and in dimensions far greater, in most instances, than our own? Beyond that we know nothing about them. What even do we know about the blades of grass beneath our feet, or the shrubs and flowers and trees around us, except that they flourish in spring, bloom in summer, and fade with the winter's storms? *Nothing*—practically nothing—except that there is something in the soil, the air, the heat, and the cold, which alternately makes them grow and wither, and at last, like ourselves, decay. But as all these are reflections, and not recollections, I must revert to my narrative.

The sorrows of youth are of short duration. I had now to turn my attention to the means of living, as my parents could not afford to keep me at home in idleness. I had, as far as their income allowed, the opportunity of obtaining a solid and useful education, but I did not take advantage of it to the extent I ought to have done. My inclinations were strongly in favour of a seafaring life, and, consequently, my time was more occupied in boats, and short excursions with fishermen, than with my school-books. My mother frequently complained that my clothes were soiled with tar; and the school-master, though he locked me up every Saturday with an extra lesson to learn, to make up for my absence during the week, made no more impression upon me than the parental lectures. I was resolved to be a sailor, in spite of all they said and did; and considering book learning a mere waste of time, I would not apply myself to it.

THE "ARETHUSA," HER OWNER, SKIPPER AND CREW.

The landed property of the Laird, which he had inherited from his father, consisting, as it did, to a large extent, of rock and heather, was too limited to maintain himself and family, or at least for his wants. He had consequently invested a little spare—and some borrowed—money in ships, chiefly small

coasters, which had proved successful, so that he was, at the time to which I refer, a thriving ship-owner as well as a landowner.

In the summer months the largest of the Laird's vessels, a brigantine of about 150 tons, made a voyage from Greenock to Newfoundland with a general cargo, but chiefly coals, and thence took cargo, chiefly consisting of salted cod-fish, to Spain or Portugal, and thence with wines, corkwood, and other cargo, back to the Clyde (Glasgow generally).

My father and the schoolmaster, having after various consultations, arrived at the conclusion that the best way to show me how much happier I should be on shore than at sea, would be to allow me, when I had reached the mature age of fourteen years, to accept an offer of the Laird's skipper of the brigantine, to take me as cabin-boy for a voyage to Newfoundland in his vessel, which bore the high-sounding name of the *Arethusa*.

But the *Arethusa* was far from the stamp of vessel which her name indicated—she was short and bluff-bowed—a regular feather-bedder when any attempt was made to drive her through the water. She had square sails on her foremast, and a spanker and gaff topsail on the main or after-mast. She had a large bust as figure-head, which the skilled carver, regardless of her name, had endeavoured to re-

present as a likeness of the Laird her owner ; the only resemblance, however, between the bust and the original being a very large nose, which had been sadly bruised in course of time, and a very ludicrous attempt at spectacles, which the Laird always wore. The colour of the bust was not much out of the way, for the Laird and the figure-head were both of a brownish hue, except on certain prominent parts of the countenance, which was marked by some very suspicious red spots. The Laird himself was, in education, not much above the skipper, for he had been brought up to the sea, and had inherited his father's patrimony, when, on the death of his elder batchelor brother, he had reached middle-age, and saved a little money.

The crew of the *Arethusa* consisted of her skipper, a thorough old salt, who had been trained in the coal trade of the north-east coast of England, and had, many years previously, found his way south as mate of a coaster, which had been wrecked on the shores of Ayrshire. He swore foolishly, and at times drank more than he ought to have done, though he was never what one would call really drunk—that is to say, he had, on his heaviest drinking bouts, always that amount of reason left which a certain free-liver was said to possess, when one night, dropping the latch-key of his door in his



endeavours to open it, knew that if he attempted to pick up the key from the steps where it had fallen, he should likely place himself beside it ; and very sensibly stood looking at the key until someone passed in the dawn of the morning, and picked it up for him. Before my father and the Laird, Captain Roughhead was always denouncing the evils of intoxication, so that they both considered him a temperate man, and a very proper person to take charge of a youth like myself on my first voyage to sea.

The second person in the brigantine was an "only mate ;" and though, by law, the responsibilities of the command would have devolved upon him in the event of the death of the master, he could neither write nor read ; but I question whether the skipper himself could do much more in the way of penmanship than sign his name, for after I commenced my duties at sea, I had frequently to write letters to his dictation. The rest of the crew consisted of the cook, who acted also as steward and seaman, and performed other multifarious duties, not altogether within the line of either. There were three other seamen, one of whom could do a little carpenter's work, and another who could assist the skipper and mate in mending sails when necessary ; while the third was "Jack," pure and simple, upon whom the duty of pulling the skipper

on shore, and other odds and ends devolved. At least, the jolly-boat, while I belonged to the *Arethusa*, was always placed under his charge; no doubt arising from the fact that when the skipper was a little top-heavy, which he sometimes was during evening when in harbour abroad, "Jack," though himself fond of a stiff glass of grog when he could get it, had sense enough to keep himself sober when he knew that he had to convey the skipper from the shore to the brigantine.

Our crew consisted of six persons, "all told." Being only a supernumerary, I was not included in the number. I recollect them well; far better than I do the members of any of the various crews with whom I sailed in after years. First impressions are always the most lasting; and, as one grows older, the events of our boyhood seem to freshen our memory. They frequently look like the events of yesterday, while those of a year or two ago have faded away.

I think now I see old Captain Roughhead. He might have been, when I was placed under his charge, a man of about sixty years of age. If the brigantine had no resemblance to the name she bore, her skipper did not belie his name, for he was the roughest of the rough; but, withal, a kind-hearted, and, I think, an honest—though not at all times a

sober—man. He may have stood about five feet two inches in his stocking-soles, but what he lacked in height he made up for in breadth ; and his head was large enough for his mate, who was one of the tallest, lankiest men I ever saw at sea ; and, to boot, one of the stupidest. But he had the best of tempers ; and when the skipper swore at him, which he frequently did, *Mr.*—we always addressed him as *Mr. Maconichie*, though known familiarly amongst ourselves as “*Conchie*”—invariably replied with a pleasant, though half-idiotic, smile, remarking to himself, “*How funny,*” a favourite expression of his. However, *Conchie*, though he could neither read nor write, was a thorough hard-working sailor ; and when he clapped his hands to the topsail-halyards, stretching his long sinewy arms far above the others, the yard went aloft in gallant style. A windlass or capstan-bar bent under his swing ; and we never required to use a fish-hook for the anchor, as *Conchie*, catching the fluke with the bight of a rope, soon brought it up to the level of the rail.

The other men much resembled those of their class of the period. Somewhat exacting, if not tyrannical, fond of spinning yarns, and fonder still of a glass of whisky or rum and water, when they could get it ; economical at sea, but thriftless on

shore ; good sailors, but prone to a little skulking when they had a chance ; they had a strong faith in the Bible, even to a literal belief in the whale that swallowed Jonah, and in the navigation laws of Cromwell ; but they were not very Christian in their views towards the sailors of other nations, especially the French.

I do not recollect their names—indeed, I question if I ever heard them—except that the cook was called Joe, sometimes "Slushey," and the sailor who did any little carpenter work, had the soubriquet of "Chips," while the sailor who occasionally assisted the skipper and mate in mending sails, was known as "Palmy." I at first thought that that was his real name ; and I recollect getting a cuff on the side of the head for calling him Mr. Palmy, which he considered an insult, as it afterwards appeared that his soubriquet arose from the fact of wearing a "palm" when at work—a piece of leather strapped to the palm of the hand, with a flat thimble in the centre, to receive the head of the large needle used in the manufacture or repair of sails.

The places of abode on board the *Arethusa* were about as good as those in other vessels of her class, but that is not saying much for them ; there were then no Acts of Parliament to regulate either the amount of space for the crew, or their safety or

comfort. The forecastle was barely five feet in height between decks, and not much more than four feet below the beams, so that no one on board could stand upright in any part of it—not even Captain Roughhead himself, though I cannot recollect that he ever troubled himself to visit the forecastle. It was approached by a scuttle-hatch about two feet square, which had to be kept closed in bad weather, so that the place then would have been as dark as any dungeon had it not been feebly lit up by a small oil lamp, which had no cover to it. In other respects it was worse than most dungeons, for the only ventilation was through the scuttle-hatch ; and as the hawsers and other rough ships' stores, besides spare sails and numerous other odds and ends, were stowed away in the forecastle, the space for the sailors' bunks or hammocks, and for their chests of clothes, was of the most limited description. At all times it was necessarily a dirty place from the character of the stores it contained, and the various duties—some of them unmentionable—performed in it ; but in bad weather it was the most loathsome abode that could be imagined. Here, however, the crew of the *Arethusa* had to sleep, wash, dress, and take their daily food, except in fine weather, when most of these operations were, as might be supposed, performed on deck.

Nor was the cabin a very great deal better than the fore-castle. This was close aft, or at the other extreme of the vessel; it was approached by a somewhat similar scuttle, although there was a companion-hatch over it; and, abaft that, there was a small skylight, which could be opened in good weather. On either side of this cabin there were two open sleeping-berths, one for the skipper and the other for the mate. On one side of the fore-part of the cabin there was a sort of locker-room, which contained the dry provisions, such as biscuits, flour, oatmeal, sugar, tea, and a quarter cask of rum, taken on board in bond when the *Arethusa* made a "foreign voyage." This cabin or store—the sanctum of sanctums—was under the special charge of the skipper himself; and on the opposite side there was a similar space, which contained all culinary articles and crockery-ware, with a berth below the racks for the plates and dishes, where the cook, who acted as steward also, slept. As I was a supernumerary, a temporary sleeping-place had been made for me athwart-ships, on the lower part of the transoms; and though, of course, within the limits of the main cabin, it was open to it, like the berths of the skipper and mate. I had, therefore no right to complain; for though my berth was an awkward one, especially when the *Arethusa* rolled about, it was superior to the fore-castle.

D.

Such was the craft, her crew and equipment, in which I made my first voyage to sea from the little fishing village behind the island in my native county of Wigtonshire.

## CHAPTER III.

### I SET SAIL ON MY FIRST VOYAGE.

**I** DO not know that I have ever since experienced such rapturous delight as when I ascertained that the Laird and my father had given their consent to Captain Roughhead's proposal to take me for a cabin-boy. The *Arethusa* had completed her last coasting voyage for the winter, and was then at home, fitting out in the harbour for her annual foreign voyage, under the immediate direction of the Laird and her skipper. Her departure "abroad" was an event in the village, whose inhabitants were more or less interested in it, as the families of the crew resided in the place, and the Laird encouraged the shopkeepers and tradesmen by getting all the supplies of the voyage from them, except the "bonded stores," which were taken on board from the Customs at Greenock on her clearance for St. John's.

Close attention at school became out of the question when it had been decided that I was to make a voyage in the *Arethusa*, and the most of my time



was spent on board during her equipment. I might have done a great deal more good for myself at school, but the tar-bucket had more charms for me than my school-books ; and as I was of some little assistance in passing the spunyarn-ball to the riggers, as they served the shrouds and stays, my kind father, against the will of my mother, allowed me to have very much of my own way, although I was always expected to attend school for an hour in the forenoon, and make myself master of a lesson at the manse in the evening.

I recollect that many of the boys at school who had seafaring proclivities—and who amongst the boys of our seagirt homes have not?—envied me, and wished that there were more vessels in the harbour where they could get the chance of a distant voyage and satisfy the natural yearnings of our boyhood to see foreign lands—yearnings much stronger than they are now, when distant shores can be so easily reached. But my supposed good fortune was something more than envied. My school companions looked upon me as one about to enjoy all the liberties of manhood, with salt beef and sea biscuits at my unlimited disposal, with the right of talking to men as if they were my equals, and free from all the terrors of the schoolmaster and his cane, as well as the numerous necessary restrictions of boyhood at

home. They little knew that all these were very light compared with the hardships and dangers of the sea, and the thralldom of the petty tyrants under whom they would require to serve and to obey, should they choose a seafaring life as a profession. But more of this anon.

It was a beautiful early summer morning when the *Arethusa* set sail, on the occasion to which I refer, on her annual foreign voyage. Nearly the whole village, but that is not saying a great deal, turned out to witness her departure. The Laird was, of course, there, and so were the members of his family, and also my father and mother and those of my sisters and brothers who were at home.

On that memorable occasion, I thought myself quite as much a sailor as did the First Lord of the Admiralty at Cherbourg, when arranging the British fleet in line to salute Her Majesty on her arrival in that famous roadstead. With my white-duck-trousers, strapped tightly round my waist, striped shirt, loose blue jacket, and straw hat, with its extra length of blue ribbon, I looked every inch a sailor. But there was a big lump in my throat, and I think the cuff of my jacket found its way to my eyes when I parted with my good old parents; but if any tears had been visible, they were brushed

hastily away. I recollect my feelings perfectly well, and though my movements were awkward, I had so far hidden my parting grief that the skipper whispered to my mother, greatly to her chagrin, that I cared less about leaving home for the first time than he did on parting with his wife on his 259th voyage to sea, coasting and foreign.

“Why, bless your heart, mam, when my father kicked me out the house at Shields, half a century ago, and my mother winked at it and said, ‘It’s all for his good a-going to sea,’ I thought my heart would break. Yet with all your fondling and kissing o’ him, your youngster braves it out like a man.”

But my mother’s heart was too full to reply to this friendly historical episode of the skipper’s own starting in life.

“I did not get the better of it,” he continued, by way of consolation, “until the mate gave me a tarnation good ropes ending to stop my blubbering. Now, you see, we won’t require to do anything o’ that sort wi’ your boy, for he don’t stand in need o’ it. He’s the richt sort to mak’ a sailor,—he is. I didn’t think I was—and maybe I wasn’t—yet I hae been a captain for more than twenty years; and when you see what I ha’e done, ye need na’ be afeard about your son getting on at sea.”

But the casting adrift of the rope moorings from

the little jetty or quay-wall cut short this interesting colloquy, and sent everyone on shore except the crew of the *Arethusa*, which hauling out to the roadstead, set her foretopsail jib and spanker, and with a light but fair wind, slowly left the harbour.

I did cry then, and it was no use to attempt to hide it; my tears had been bottled up to such an extent, that vent became necessary to afford relief. The village and harbour and their surroundings, it is true, had not many attractions beyond the manse, the ivy-clad church, the valley and the trout-stream. The ruined castle on the cliff and the bare granite rocks on which it stood, presented few, if any, enjoyable features in the landscape; nor, with the exception of the trees around the churchyard and the few clumps of evergreens at the lower part of the village, were there any natural attractions to rivet one to the spot; but these were soon lost in the distance, and then nothing except the small sandy island, which seemed now to form a portion of a rugged sterile shore—cold and bleak even on a sunny summer's morning—was left for the eye to rest upon. Nevertheless, it marked the site of *home*, and that thought, now that I was leaving it, gave the bleak and rugged rocks a thousand charms.

But light and airy is the youthful heart. The rippling sea, with just sufficient wind to disturb its

surface, sparkling bright and silvery in a noontide sun, naturally assisted to cheer me up ; and when—strange as it now seems—our dinner, consisting of broth and a good lump of corned beef, was served out, the charm of a seafaring life in fine weather, and its accompaniments, fast took the place of home, and especially of school and its reminiscences.

All sail being now set, we made steady progress towards Isla-Craig. As we passed close under its lee—so close that in one part we were only within a few fathoms of the precipitous rock—the skipper brought from his lock-up or store-room a most extraordinary-looking machine. I had never seen such a thing before, and at first could not understand what it was. It looked like a fowling-piece, but it was more than double its weight and little more than half its length, with a large bore, expanding something like the mouth of a small water-funnel at its end. Questioning in my mind its real properties, I thought it might be a patent description of pump ; but the skipper soon deceived the impression that it was something connected with hydraulics by taking a flask of powder from his pocket, and pouring, as it seemed to me, the greater portion of its contents down the funnel or muzzle, after that a lot of shot and a large piece of brown paper, ramming the whole down with an iron rod.

## THE SKIPPER AND HIS CAULKERS.

What on earth, I thought, could the skipper be about ; for I then saw it was a gun or cannon of some sort, or a combination of both, called, as I afterwards ascertained, a *blunderbuss*, a famous instrument in those days, kept for the protection of lonely mansions against the encroachment of robbers, and on board of small ships for the purpose of dispelling boat crews of pirates, then too frequently infesting portions of the African shores of the Mediterranean and the coasts of the Spanish Peninsula.

As the skipper had taken two or three rather stiff tumblers of whisky-and-water since we got under weigh—no doubt to drown his sorrows on parting with his wife for the 259th time—he was what one might call not very sober ; or rather on the merry side of intoxication, and in the mood for a prank. What that prank might be was a matter of such grave doubts in my mind—for drunken men and loaded blunderbusses are not very fit companions—that I kept out of his way ; and when he ordered me to tell Joe to send him a "caulker," after he had stuffed the muzzle of this strange-looking instrument with the wad of brown paper, I obeyed, but with considerable reluctance and doubt as to his intentions.

I did not know what caulker meant ; Joe, how-

ever, did ; and quietly remarked, as he handed to me a tumbler of whisky-and-water, that that was the fifth caulker the skipper had had since we sailed. Still, Captain Roughhead, gulping it over, seemed to know perfectly well what he was about, when, putting the blunderbuss to his shoulder, and pointing the muzzle to a perfect swarm of white sea-birds which covered a bluff point of the black rock, he let fly, with a sound which terrified me, the contents of this unwieldy and extraordinary weapon.

Whether it was the rebound or the five caulkers, or both combined, I cannot say ; but I recollect that after the skipper had discharged the blunderbuss he fell down with a thump upon an unmentionable part of his personage, which made the deck quiver.

“ Conchie, you lang-legged lubber,” he exclaimed, as he attempted to rise, but which he could not do without assistance, “ why the de’il havn’t you had the decks scrubbed ; don’t you see that the slush on them has tripped me up, and is so thick and slippery, that one might as well try to rise from a clean sheet o’ ice ? ”

But Conchie, as he and Joe assisted him to get up, only smiled, and said, “ How funny.” Another caulker, however, restored the disturbed nerves of the skipper, if it did not altogether restore his

equilibrium; and his idea of what was necessary to be done appeared to be clear enough. Ordering the foretopsail to be thrown aback, and the jolly boat to be lowered, he next gave Conchie and Jack instructions to jump into it, and pick up the most eatable portion of the birds that had fallen beneath the blunderbuss.

It must have been a perfect scatterer, for no end of maimed, fluttering, or dead sea-birds covered that portion of the sea beneath the rock on which they had been seated. They were, however, all sea-gulls, not worth picking up, except two Solan geese, and these were brought on board, not, however, without a struggle, for they had been only maimed, and gave Conchie a job to catch them, showing fight as he stretched out his long arms to haul them into the boat, while he remarked for the twentieth time that day, "How very funny."

Certainly the event appeared very funny to me, and I wondered if there were many more rocks on the sea where vessels stopped to shoot sea-birds.

We were, however, all delighted with the exploit, for as Joe understood the art of converting even a Solan goose into a savoury dish—no mean art—we all looked forward to an extra feast. The skipper was particularly jolly; the sixth caulker had not then had the effect of turning him from the merry



into the stupid or speechless mood, so he began to recount to Conchie, Joe, and myself his exploits with his famous blunderbuss.

THE SKIPPER CAULKES TOO MUCH.

"I never miss," he said, and how could he in this case, for the birds covered the rock as thick as they could pack themselves. "I brought the riffs down"—referring to an attempted attack as he supposed of Riff pirates on the coast of Morocco—"about as thick as them birds, when they came aff a' o' a heap to seize the *Arethusa* yae calm nicht when on a voyage from St. John's to ane o' the Papish ports in the Mediterranean, where they won't eat onything but fish, or say they won't, at fasting times.

"Lor, bless you hearts, how they a' ran when I sent a scatterer o' rather peppering nobbs amang them, bigger than them shot I let fly at the gulls, and though big enough to mak' the Riffs jump and limp and tak' to their oars rather faster than they cam', I don't think it kill't ony o' them. I hope it didn't, for you know," he said, "Tommy," turning to me as he spoke, "it dis' na' become ony Christian man to tak' the life o' his fellow-creature, though the Riff scoundrels would ha'e cut our throats had they ance got on board o' the *Arethusa*."

"How very funny," said Conchie.

"Funny! what do you mean?" said the skipper,

angrily, as he turned to his "only mate," for there is a time and place for everything. "What's funny about the thocht o' ha'ing ane's throat cut on the high seas or onywhere else by a set o' marauding scoundrels. Do you think if they had got aboard and tied your lang legs and arms to the main rigging, and then stuck you like a stupid auld sow that ye are, maybe ripping ye up afterwards, there would ha'e been onything funny in a' that?"

Conchie felt rebuked, looked upon the occasion, on reflection, as a very serious one, for Conchie had been on board as a sailor during that memorable event, and had been since promoted; considered it on second thought no laughing matter, and expressed, in all humility, his matured opinion that the skipper's indomitable bravery had on that occasion saved them all from a terrible death, and the property of the Laird from unquestionable capture.

But, after all, there was something in the event, or "awful emergency of danger," which the skipper now portrayed in such vivid colours that gave occasion to the only mate inadvertantly letting slip his favourite exclamation. Indeed, as I afterwards learned from Conchie, in strict confidence, and, therefore, I ought not to repeat it now, the presence of the Riff pirates, which were supposed to be about

to attack the *Arethusa*, was on that occasion somewhat questionable.

No doubt the *Arethusa* had been becalmed off the coast where these once notorious scoundrels were known to infest ; but Conchie, with all his stupidity, had always been under the impression that the two boats which loomed in the distance amidst the haze of that moonlight night, one of which did all but sheer alongside of the *Arethusa*, were peaceable fishermen.

However, the skipper held so very decided an opinion that they were not, and he ought to have known much better than Conchie, that he let fly the scattering contents of the blunderbuss amongst them. As a breeze sprung up soon afterwards, and the *Arethusa* proceeded on her voyage, no one on board ever ascertained what they were or what amount of mischief the blunderbuss had done.

I must not, however, suppose that the skipper had as many extra caulkers on that occasion as he had when he related this remarkable episode of his bravery and the extraordinary effect of the brigantine's sole implement of defence or warfare, or that he magnified the danger, which people sometimes do when they imbibe exhilarating liquors ; but I may add as a warning to all skippers who drink too much grog, that they should be very cautious

how they use their firearms, for had these men been fishermen it might have fared very hard with Captain Roughhead.

Conchie having eaten humble pie, and his skipper having given him a bit of learned advice about using hasty exclamations and inappropriate expressions, had another caulker, and then attempted to strut the quarter-deck in his ordinary steady gait, for it takes a good many caulkers to make a short and thick set man lose his equilibrium, or, rather, in nautical phraseology, the proper use of his sea-legs.

The fair wind had faded away to a very light breeze, but still in our favour, though the tide now and again got the mastery of our sails. Eight bells had been struck from beneath the little belfry on the afterpart of the companion-hatch; and, as it was the skipper's watch on deck, he continued to pace to and fro, sometimes steadying himself against the rails, at other times rather hastily gripping the main-shrouds, but continuing his whistle for a breeze.

Now and again he would hum a tune—not a very melodious one; but more frequently, when the whistling ceased, he held some conversation with himself in broken sentences, in which expressions such as—"blow'd him," or "dash my

buttons," or "who'd ha'e thocht it?" were frequently discernible.

We had now left Pladda Light, off the south end of the Island of Arran, a long way on our port quarter, and were steering for the Cumbrae Heads, or rather the narrow bit of ordinary channel between them and Garrick Head, the southernmost point of the Island of Bute. Whether two lights then marked the channel I cannot recollect; but the skipper saw two on a point where there was only one, and in his attempt to take the *Arethusa* between these two imaginary lights, he bumped her on the very shore or point where the one light had been placed as a warning for mariners to avoid it.

Happily the beach on which we bumped was a soft one; and though the night had become pretty dark for summer, the blaze from the lighthouse cast quite enough of light on our deck to enable us to see where we were and what we were about. The skipper was at first not very clear as to the exact locality, though he knew, or ought to have known, every sandbank and every stone on the coast; but all the crew perfectly understood where we had grounded, and as it was flood-tide, they also knew that we should float off without much or any damage; consequently, when the watch were roused and came upon deck, they took matters very

leisurely, the mate remarking, as he might well do in this case, "How very funny."

But the skipper was in a towering passion, swearing against his ship, the lighthouse, the hydrographer, the sandbank, the tides, and everything else. Everybody and everything was to blame except himself. Had there been official inquiries by the Board of Trade in those days, and had one then and there been appointed to inquire into the cause of the *Arethusa* getting on shore, he would have proved to a demonstration that it was entirely the fault of the charts, or the lights, or the authorised sailing directions, so far as regards the proper set of the tides—any cause except the true one.

When the tide rose enough, the jolly boat was launched, and Joe, with Chips in her, had not much difficulty in pulling the *Arethusa* off the bank or sandy beach into the channel or fairway through the Cumbraes.

As the wind though still very light had veered round to the north-east and was against us going to Greenock, we shaped our course for Rothesay Bay, where we anchored in safety and without any further mishap.

## CHAPTER IV.

### I SAIL FOR GREENOCK.

**T**HERE are few parts of the coasts of Great Britian where more beautiful natural scenery or a succession of finer roadsteads are to be found than on the Clyde. It would be difficult to say which of the lochs or harbours presents the greatest charms or the best anchorage, although some of them possess more advantages in that respect than others.

But, perhaps, Rothesay Bay, where the *Arethusa* anchored for the remainder of the night after she had been on shore, is the prettiest, if not in all respects the most convenient of these various roadsteads.

Woods rising above the woods, studded with handsome villas on both sides, many of them mansions and even castles, diversify the scene, while the luxuriant foliage and green fields, extending to the edge of the sea, give a beauty and charm to the scenery seldom to be found in any other portion of the earth.

It has been my lot to visit most of earth's finest

and grandest scenes, from the awe-striking cascades of Niagara and the variegated and truly beautiful landscapes with which they are surrounded, and that too when an "Indian summer" brought out the foliage in its richest and finest colours. I have travelled over the prairies of the far West, and the valleys of the great Mississippi river, whose luxuriant soil is destined to afford profitable employment to millions of the human race. I have scrambled on the snow-clad mountains of Switzerland, and surveyed their ice-bound peaks, sparkling in the rays of the rising sun; and I have sailed down the Rhine amidst its vine-clad hills and ruined castles. I have also seen everything worthy of note in the sweet and placid valley of the Thames from Oxford to Richmond, both famous alike in song and history. I have wandered through Italy, and have had a peep at the Grecian Archipelago, whose ancient glory still sheds a lustre over those now benighted islands. Athens, whose fame has been made even more glorious by the pen of Byron; and Cintra, which has likewise been the subject of his verse, have in their turn been objects of my admiration. Nor have my wanderings been confined to America and Europe, for I have travelled through Persia—had a glimpse of the site of ancient Babylon, a donkey-ride over bits of Mesopotamia, and I have been far



away into some of the rich plains of India, and through the spice islands of Ceylon.

But what of all this? my readers may ask. Well, it is to show that my opinion ought to be of some value when I say that I never saw any scenery which pleased me more than that of the Clyde, and I should advise my friends who have never seen it to go there before they think of going to any of the far away places I have named, though the latter can now be reached with much less expense and trouble than when I visited them, which is perhaps another reason why I have puffed up my own extensive wanderings. People think little about such wanderings now; they can now go all over India in three months, and round the world by way of America, Japan, and China, in about the same time; they have merely to ask Messrs. Cook for a ticket, and pay for it, and they may see New York, and the Falls, or Salt Lake City and California, or Jerusalem, or Mesopotamia, during their ordinary holiday, and be fed sumptuously all the way. It was very different in my travelling days.

But I must give my readers the hint that when they visit the Clyde they should take waterproof overcoats with them, and an umbrella would not be amiss. Alas! that one should be obliged to offer such a warning, for, without the rain and drizzling

mist, and with an Italian sky, the Clyde would be so much of a paradise on earth that when those who now live on its banks shift their quarters to the garden of Eden they may feel that they have never been out of it.

There are, however, no roses without thorns ; no true happiness without a blemish of one sort or another ; no mechanical production that is really perfect ; nothing in nature, much less in art, that may not be improved upon—in a word, there is nothing truly perfect in this transitory state of things.

As there is, therefore, nothing perfect even in nature, the Clyde, with all its beautiful scenery, is too frequently overcast with a clouded sky. Mists often hang over it, accompanied either with drizzling showers or heavy rains. In fact, I cannot recollect—and I have frequently visited the spot—ever having been on that most beautiful of all Scottish lakes, Loch Lomond, without being drenched, or encountering a dull and clouded sky charged with water ready to be poured at any moment upon the tourist. Indeed, some portions of the Clyde are proverbial for rain, especially Greenock, where it is told of a southern traveller, who, in the midst of that small drizzling mist which is said to wet an Englishman to the skin, asked a boy whom he met

in its streets, "Does it always rain here?" "Na, na," replied the youth, "it disna aye rain, for it sometimes snaws."

It was, however, a beautiful clear morning when Captain Roughhead, aroused from his slumbers of two hours' duration in Rothesay Bay, called upon me to bring him a bucket of water, and having refreshed himself by dipping his head into it three or four times, and making an effort to wash his face, ordered up all hands to get under weigh.

Although the wind was still light it was favourable; and, as our skipper, after he had cooled in the bucket of water the receptacle of his reasoning faculties, was as clear in his intellect as any ordinary man would have been who had not imbibed one half the strong drink that he had done—his orders were promptly obeyed.

Conchie soon got the anchor on board, and setting all sail, we shaped our course for Greenock, where we arrived, without any incident of importance, on the afternoon of the day we started from Rothesay.

#### VISIT THE ANCHOR TAVERN, AND OBSERVE ITS INMATES.

Greenock was, if it is not so still, a tidal harbour, and though it had a dock, there was not sufficient depth to float the *Arethusa* at low water. Consequently, she lay embedded in the mud at the inner

quay wall abreast of the town. Here we were to receive our cargo, but as we should be from two to three weeks in loading, our skipper engaged lodgings on shore, and took me with him.

The house where we took up our abode faced the harbour, and was within a stone's throw of where the *Arethusa* lay. It was one of those gable-ended houses much more rare in Scotland than in England, but seldom now to be met with except in its oldest towns. It was built of stone, intersected by large oak beams, and some portions of these, with the window and door frames, were curiously carved. The end facing the sea was a "whisky-shop;" or, at least, that was the name by which it was known, although every description of strong drink could be there obtained. It had a stone floor, well sanded; and behind the counter there were ranged against the wall three huge oak casks, with polished hoops and gilt figures, denoting the gallons of whisky they were supposed to contain—the quantity was something fabulous. Between these there were ranged on shelves numerous bottles of variegated colours, labelled Brandy, Gin, Bitters, and so forth. Crimson curtains adorned the windows, and everything was very clean and cheery-looking.

Above the shop, which was under the sole charge of the landlord himself, there was a large room,

approached from the main entrance to the building—in itself combining a tavern and lodging-house, with its principal window facing the harbour. The rest of the house consisted of a number of small parlours and bedrooms, &c., and these were under the charge of the landlady.

The proprietors were a thrifty, well-to-do couple, and the house was nearly always full, its guests consisting chiefly of masters of coasting vessels and commercial travellers, with a sprinkling of farmers.

Although the large room above the whisky-shop was known as the commercial-room, and was appropriated during the course of the day to the use of commercial travellers and their customers, it was open in the evening to many of the shopkeepers and small shipowners, who made it their place of meeting to have a pipe and a gossip over their tumbler or two of whisky-toddy.

The room was a handsome one of its kind: hunting and stage-coach scenes adorned one side of its wall, and ships the other. Down the centre ran an old oak table, at which fourteen or fifteen persons could conveniently find seats. Chairs of similar material surrounded the room, and on each side of the fire-place stood two huge easy chairs, covered in leather, and mounted with large brass nails.

It might not be easy to define the political opinions

of the evening frequenters of the commercial-room of the Anchor, for such was the name of the tavern, except that the great majority of them appeared to entertain the opinion that the Treaties of Reciprocity of Huskisson, which had not then been long in operation, were in the fair way of ruining British shipping. A few of them thought that the repeal of the Corn Laws, then a good deal talked about, might not do a great deal of harm; but they were unanimously of opinion that the repeal of the Navigation Laws, which then loomed in the distance, though only talked about by "Radicals and Revolutionists," would sweep the British flag from every sea.

But a draper and grocer, who were regular in their attendance at these evening gatherings, and had no interest as owners of vessels, though they did not clearly understand the nature of the Navigation Laws, frequently, I recollect, and amidst great confusion, sturdily maintained that the repeal of the Corn Laws could not, after all, be a bad measure for shipowners, whatever it might be for landowners and farmers.

Now and again a commercial traveller would support the somewhat advanced views of the draper and grocer; and I have the most vivid recollection of one of these gentlemen making his appearance

during a discussion, whose remarks made an impression on my young mind which I can never forget.

#### MEET A NOTABLE STRANGER AT THE ANCHOR TAVERN.

He had arrived during the forenoon of the evening to which I refer from Manchester, *vid* Liverpool, by one of the early steamers which then traded between that port and Greenock. He was on his way to Glasgow, and having finished his business with the draper and other customers of his line in the town, had taken up his quarters at the Anchor for the night.

The hours of meeting in the commercial-room were usually from eight to eleven, p.m., sometimes extending to midnight; the room being generally free after eight o'clock, so that the table could be cleared for the tumblers and pipes of the evening guests. But that evening, when the usual customers had gathered, the upper end of the table was occupied by a tray from which the traveller was having his tea, with a slice of cold beef, a loaf of bread, and a couple of boiled eggs. Judging by the hearty manner in which he partook of the food that had been placed before him, the meal evidently sufficed for dinner and supper as well as tea. Nor was he in any way disturbed by the gathering com-

pany, to all of whom he was evidently an entire stranger except the draper.

He was a young man—very young to fill the position of a commercial traveller ; but, though a boy in years, his countenance displayed marks of thought and great intelligence. He was *an Englishman*, the son, as I afterwards ascertained, of a Sussex yeoman. His forehead was lofty and very broad ; he had bright and sparkling eyes ; prominent, but well-formed nose, and a somewhat small mouth, with thin lips. He had one of the most insinuating, pleasing smiles I ever saw ; and his manners, though quiet and retiring, were those of a man who had evidently mingled in higher society than the class to which he belonged. Altogether, he was a young man whom no one could pass unnoticed in any assembly.

When he spoke—which he did for the first time in reply to Captain Roughhead, who expressed a hope that the smoke from his pipe did not annoy him—the few words in reply, to the effect that the fumes of the tobacco did not injure his appetite, flowed from his mouth in mellowed whispers, and his placid smile showed that such matters were not likely to disturb his usual equanimity, much less ruffle his temper.

"You see," he continued, as he rose to help himself to another slice of cold beef from a joint on the



side table, "the smoke does not prevent me doing full justice to our landlord's excellent fare ; though I do not myself indulge in either a pipe or cigar, I have been accustomed to associate with those who do."

"Ah," said an old fellow, who sat on one of the large easy chairs, "I wish I had such an appetite as you, young man."

The young man smiled as he looked at him, but said nothing, although I dare say he perceived in the tumbler of rum-and-water the old man held in his hand, and into which his red nose was pretty far advanced when he spoke, the reason why the querist's appetite was not so good as his own.

"Well, if you don't smoke, I suppose you'll join us in a glass of punch."

But the stranger again smiled, and shook his head, making no further reply.

"Bless my heart !" continued the man with the red nose, addressing the young man, "you're a prodigy ; going from town to town, 'midst sunshine and storm, rain and snaw, and no tasting a drap o' onything stronger than tea, nor haeing a puff o' tobacco after yer' sair wark was ower for the day. Wunders wull ne'er cease," he continued, and turning to an old commercial traveller who sat by his side, he asked, "Did you ever, Mr. Shortyard, see or hear

afore o' ane o' your line o' business who ne'er smoked, nor had his glass o' grog ? "

Mr. Shortyard might have heard of such another person " on the road," but he did not say so ; and his own looks betokened those of one who enjoyed both his pipe and liquor to an extent somewhat beyond moderation, for he was then mixing his third tumbler of toddy, though the clock on the mantel-piece had not struck nine. He, however, remarked in a whisper which the stranger evidently did not hear, that the proprietors of the Anchor would not make a fortune out of guests with good appetites, who neither smoked, nor drank anything stronger than tea or coffee.

" Don't be put out," said our skipper, addressing the stranger with a patronising air. " Drinkin's a bad habit, and smoking worser, and though I do a little o' baith mysel', I approve o' temperance ; it looks weel in young men." And in this strain he would no doubt have gone on at greater length had he not caught the eye of the draper, who did not appear to relish Captain Roughhead's essay on the advantages of temperance.

The truth was that, as the young traveller was on his first round at Greenock, the draper had expected an extra tumbler or two that night at the stranger's cost, the practice being for commercial travellers to

treat their customers. Indeed, most bargains were then struck over a glass of grog at the nearest tavern.

AND LISTEN TO HIS DISCOURSE.

The table having now been cleared of everything except tumblers, glass measures, long clay pipes, and paper screws of tobacco, Captain Roughhead, seeing that he had offended the draper by his curtailed essay on temperance, with whom by the way, he had been in negotiation for a shipment of his previous year's stock of goods for St. John's, ordered at his own expense, a bowl of hot whisky-and-water for the company round.

This extraordinary stretch of liberality on the part of our skipper—the company did not know that he had an eye to business—elicited a cheer or “hear, hear,” from everybody in the room, and completely restored the equilibrium of the draper's evidently-disturbed temper.

As the landlord's “biggest bowl” was a basin of considerable depth and diameter, the evening frequenters of the commercial-room of the Anchor knew that the order embraced at least two tumblers to each person present, free of cost, and the company was, of course, exuberant in its gratitude. And when the tumblers were filled from the smoking basin,

and the chairman, in a most unconstitutional manner, proposed the health of our skipper in place of that of the King, describing him as a king amongst the skippers, the cheers and rattling of glasses were almost deafening.

The toast of "Ships, Colonies and Commerce" followed, and that sentiment led to various speeches of the usual stamp, which had frequently been heard and cheered in the same room, all about the "Flag that braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze;" how Britannia ever ruled the waves, and ever should and would rule them; and how that the recent treaties of reciprocity were meant to encourage the Yankees, and the Norwegians and Swedes, with their sailors fed on "fat pork and treacle" on the one side of the Atlantic, and on the other with "beans, black bread, and sour krout," all to the ruin of the little island of Great Britain, which lay between them.

"Was it no' an ootrageous Act o' Parliament," exclaimed the chairman, whose health had been coupled with the "Ships, Colonies and Commerce," "to allow thae foreigners to drive our ships frae that ocean which had aye been oor ane, which Camperdown and Nelson had at sic' an awfu' sacrifice o' human bluid, an' British treasure, cleared for oor ane use, and for which Pitt resolved to

enshroud himsel' in the Union Jack, and wi' a cannon ball at his feet, bury himsel' in the ocean sooner than gie up any o' oor maritime richts !"

Here there was vociferous cheering, and thumping on the table, so that the glasses rung again.

"What justice," continued the chairman, "can there be in gieing thae foreigners, wha hae naething to gie us in return, a' the privileges o' comin to oor ports wi' what cargo they like, and taking awa' what they like, on the same terms as oor ships? Whar's their colonies? Whar's their trade that we can get onything out of them in return? Whar's the equality? Can onybody tell me?" And here the speaker paused, and exultantly waited for an answer.

For a minute there was silence, and no one seemed disposed to reply. The majority had, indeed, nothing to say, except approval: nearly all of them entirely coinciding with the opinions that had been expressed.

At last the young commercial traveller ventured a remark, to the effect that the more ships which frequented our ports the better it would be for the people of this country, and that competition would reduce the freights on those articles which our people required from other countries, by which we should also be gainers.

The company however, could not see any force in this reasoning, and, for the reasons adduced by the chairman, scouted the idea of our ships competing successfully with those of other nations. But when the young stranger broached the question of the Corn Laws, with which he seemed to be very familiar, he found more converts to his views than he could have anticipated to find in such an assembly; and when he pictured in glowing terms, warming with the subject, the large quantities of grain which would be brought in our ships from other countries, if the duties on corn were abolished, most of the company seemed disposed to consider that these laws were far from being a blessing, especially to our shipowners.

Following up the inroad he had evidently made, the young Englishman with a quiet tact and force which enchanted everyone, now appealed to their sense of justice, and asked why the bread of life of the millions should be taxed for the supposed benefit of a comparatively few wealthy landowners, and why the people were not allowed to buy their daily food in the cheapest markets? Then, directing attention to the distress which at that time prevailed throughout the country, especially in the manufacturing districts, he showed how this arose almost entirely from the high price of food on the

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one hand, which enhanced the rate of wages, so that our manufacturers could not successfully compete with other nations; and on the other from the difficulties placed in the way of importing those raw materials necessary to afford them employment.

Whether it was his style of reasoning and clear forcible language, or the whisky punch, or both combined, which brought about the change, I cannot pretend to say; but I recollect that the enthusiasm was almost as great, and the knocking of glasses nearly as furious, as when the chairman had finished his oration. In the midst of the cheering the stranger slipped away. I suppose to his bedroom; and as he left, our skipper whispered to me, "Tommy, he's a clever chiel, that. He'll mak' the Lairds scratch their heeds some day. But it is time for ye tae gang tae bed."

Obedying orders, I also slipped away, and I am, consequently, unable to record at what hour the company of the commercial-room broke up that evening, or in what state of feeling and sobriety they were when they parted; but I can say this, that the young Englishman referred to did, in after years, open the eyes of the people, if he did not "mak' the Lairds scratch their heeds."

## CHAPTER V.

### PAY A VISIT TO GLASGOW BY COACH.

Although Henry Bell's *Comet* proved an unprofitable speculation in her first attempt to develop steam navigation between Glasgow, Dumbarton, and Greenock, and some years had elapsed before any other adventurer entered upon so "hazardous" an undertaking, steamers had become at the time of my first visit to the Clyde an established and successful means of communication between even much more distant ports than those I have named, and were then nearly the only means of communication between Greenock and Glasgow; they had supplanted all the passenger sailing craft, and were fast superseding the few stage coaches which still tenaciously pursued their ancient calling; even these would then have disappeared from the well-macadamised road connecting these two places had they not been supported by that portion of the seafaring population who had no faith in steamers.

Captain Roughhead was one of those unbelievers; and I recollect on the one occasion when he required



to visit Glasgow, and took me with him, that he preferred the stage-coach to the steamer. I enjoyed the drive ; and when we reached our destination I was greatly struck with the size of the city, which was much the largest place I had then seen.

#### SOJOURN AT THE WHEAT SHEAF.

I forget the name of the coach ; but I recollect that it stopped at a pretty hotel, or hostelry, called the Wheat Sheaf, on the south banks of the River Clyde, above the Broomielaw, and close to the "old," or Stockwell Street, bridge. Here we took up our quarters, having arrived after somewhat more than a three hours' ride, between nine and ten in the morning.

The landlady was a buxom widow ; and as she and our skipper had been evidently old friends, we had an extra substantial breakfast.

I recollect it well, for I was very hungry, and the fare was far superior to anything I had ever before been freely allowed to partake of—and in such abundance ! It consisted of ham and fried eggs, cold chicken and tongue, and a portion of one of the largest veal pies I had ever feasted my eyes upon. Like the fat boy in "Pickwick," I could not keep my eyes off that pie, and in case somebody might come into the room and walk away with it,

I commenced my breakfast upon its contents, though I did not finish it with them, leaving our skipper to satisfy his equally keen appetite on the other dainties.

Although I had never been a gourmand, like the now celebrated fat boy, and for many years afterwards was satisfied with very humble fare, that breakfast made a lasting impression on my mind, and I now often wonder how I could have found room in my stomach for what I stowed away that morning, and sometimes wish I had the same appetite as I had then. Considering the quantity I consumed, I should think the landlady could not have desired many such guests or customers in her house; but I suppose she balanced her accounts on the right side with what our skipper and others drank, as the tap was the best frequented part of her house.

Her chief guests were farmers from the Mearns district, ship captains of the better sort, and a good many commercial travellers, most of whom patronised very freely the whisky from a distillery not far from the Wheat Sheaf, which supplied all that was required in that line at, no doubt, much lower prices than the landlady charged for it to her thirsty customers.

Our skipper having his business to attend to in

the city, left me to dispose of myself as I pleased for the day, with instructions for me to be back to the hostelry by seven o'clock, when we should have tea, although he did not intend to return to Greenock until the following morning.

He had his dinner in the city, and as I had laid in no ordinary stock of food at breakfast, a half-penny scone (coarse roll) purchased at a baker's shop, and a pennyworth of spelding (dried haddock) from one of the hawkers who supplied that article from flat wheelbarrows in the street, supplied all my requirements in the interval.

GLASGOW AS I SAW IT A LONG TIME AGO.

Although the Trongate was a much shorter and less imposing street than it is now, I had never previously seen any thoroughfare at all approaching its dimensions. I was amazed with the size of its houses, and the splendour of its shops; but the "Tontine," with its curiously carved faces over every arch, was alike a puzzle and a wonder to me.

Under these arches the merchants of the city had long been accustomed to meet and transact their business, but what the ugly faces over the arches of such a building could have to do with its vocation, except to represent the contorted countenances of those of its members who had been unfortunate in

their speculations, I was altogether at a loss to understand.

However, my meditations about the cause of so many curious human faces were abruptly cut short by the sight under the arches of the living countenances of the Laird and the skipper (the former having left home to see about the loading and despatch of the *Arethusa*), who were in close conversation with two gentlemen, no doubt bargaining about freight for the schooner.

They did not see me, and I did not give them a chance, for I turned short round by the old tower—once a gaol, made famous by Sir Walter Scott in his description of Bailie Nicol Jarvie's interview there with Rob Roy, and strolled up High Street. Its curious gable-end houses, the old college, and the High Kirk, one of the finest cathedral churches in Scotland, occupied my attention for an hour or two; thence I wended my way to the "wash-houses" in Glasgow Green, where sturdy lasses, with their petticoats tucked up rather high above their knees, tramped out in large tubs full of soap-suds the blankets, &c., &c., of the citizens; and thence through the Green, past the tall column erected in memory of Nelson, to the high wooden bridge which spanned the Clyde at Hutchinsontown. Crossing it, I found my way along the south side of

the river to the Wheat Sheaf, where Captain Roughhead, having finished his business, had preceded me.

I HAVE A SECOND MEETING WITH THE STRANGER.

Tea, and something to it, was all ready for us, but our skipper, having rigidly maintained his temperate habits while with the Laird, had a rather stiff glass of whisky-and-water before we commenced our evening repast. He, however, did justice to it, and after a few plesantries with his old friend the landlady, we adjourned from the widow's parlour, where we had supped, to the commercial-room of the Wheat Sheaf.

There we met a number of persons collecting for the evening, of a class somewhat similar to those who frequented the commercial-room of the Anchor ; some of them Captain Roughhead had met before. The mode of procedure, and the kind of conversation, was not in many respects different to similar gatherings at the Anchor and numerous other places, only the company was composed more of commercial travellers, among whom I was pleased to meet again the young Englishman with whose manners and conversation I had been so much fascinated.

Glasgow at the time to which I now refer was greatly disturbed. It was one of the earliest places in the kingdom where the principles of Radicalism

had shown themselves in open revolt. Some of the dwellings of those persons who had publicly recommended force as the best means of effectually silencing the expression of any extreme political opinions, had been gutted, and their furniture thrown into the Clyde. Other acts of violence had been committed, and some of the leading exponents of Radicalism had been imprisoned, and even transported ; but their principles were gradually, though slowly, spreading amongst the mechanics, and from them to a few of the middle classes. A small paper called the *Reformers' Gazette* had been started to advocate the extreme views of the party, and was steadily, but surely, commanding success.

As might have been supposed, these riots were the chief subject of conversation, especially with the commercial travellers ; and although the young Englishman could not approve, but, on the contrary, unlike one or two others of his cloth then forming part of the company assembled in the commercial-room at the Wheat Sheaf, he very much disapproved of the violent outbreak of the Radicals, although agreeing entirely with all the leading features of their political principles ; indeed, he went on to show that brute force never succeeded in convincing anyone, but only tended to aggravate. At the same time, he showed in even more homely and convincing

eloquence than he had displayed at Greenock, that the principles of the Reformers were unanswerable if we were to consider (which we ought to do on all such questions) the good of our country, and that what every intelligent Radical required was simple justice—nothing more. The people, he said, were suffering through our protective laws, and, in many cases, they were starving for want of employment entirely through the operation of these laws, which were maintained solely for the benefit of the influential few, to the loss and ruin of the many, while bread, the staple article of food of the people, was forced up to an exorbitant price to maintain a few aristocratic families, not merely in luxury, which from their position they were, no doubt, entitled to have, but to enable them to accumulate wealth to an extent far beyond what they already possessed. To their wealth he had no objections to offer, nor to their enjoyment of it, and while he altogether ignored the Chartist principles about the subdivision of property and so forth, he held that the law should give every man, however humble, a chance of making money for himself, and of accumulating it if he chose to do so by his industry, economy, and honesty. He held there should be one law for all men, and that laws should not be framed as they were then for the benefit of the rich

and to the injury of the poor. He went further, and showed that wise, just, and liberal laws would be quite as beneficial to the landowner, shipowner, and farmer, as they would be to the mechanic, sailor, and common labourer, and, indeed, that the men who were opposed to the views of the Reformers would very likely be larger gainers by the changes advocated by those persons who were then considered revolutionists, than the working classes.

Such doctrines as these, advocated in the commercial-room of a tavern, were something entirely novel, and were ignored, as a rule, by the bulk of persons who usually there assembled ; but they in time prevailed, and the class to which their advocate on the present occasion belonged, supported by the manufacturers and tradesmen, especially the drapers and grocers, were the chief instruments of bringing about the vast changes which have since been made in our commercial policy. But amongst that class there was in after years no more distinguished advocate than that young commercial traveller, who, leaving business pursuits to the sacrifice of his own pecuniary interests, and devoting himself entirely to the reform of our tariff laws, especially to the repeal of all duties on the bread of life, became the great apostle of free trade, carried all before him by sound argument and peaceful means, and has left



behind him on the page of history an imperishable name.

#### DISCUSSION ABOUT STEAMSHIPS.

After he had left the room, which he did at an early hour, the conversation turned upon steam vessels, and although almost everyone present had been impressed with the soundness of the principles laid down by the young traveller, they still entertained their own opinions about other questions of progress with which they were more familiar. Captain Roughhead still stubbornly held that steam vessels would be the ruin of British shipping, if they did not explode and ruin themselves long before they had become numerous enough to bring about the disaster he contemplated. In the first place, however, he prophesied disaster to everybody who invested in steamers to be engaged in over-sea voyages, from the breaking down of their machinery, or the smashing of their paddle-wheels, or the bursting of their boilers.

"It's a' weel enough," he said—he could not deny the fact that steamers had then become a success on the Clyde—"on the river here, whar', if a boiler bursts, provided it has blown nane o' them into the air, the passengers can easily reach the shore; but whar wu'd they be at sea in ane

o' they clank-clanking puffing machines if the machinery went wrang? and whar wu'd their paddles be in a storm wi' the waves running mountains high on either side o' them, and tumbling about wi' the green seas half our'e their decks? Whar would they be I would like tae ken, if ony rational man wae experience can tell me?"

At this interrogatory, which our skipper considered a clencher, he looked about him triumphantly for an answer.

"Ah, whar?" he continued, without giving time for a reply. "I hae seen a sea that wu'd smash into smithers the strangest wheel-boxes, and as to the wheels themsel's, thae're only meant to drive mills wae water frae dams, whar it is as smooth as on ony loch, and no' a bit o' turmoil except what the wheel itsel' kicks up when it feels the wecht o' the stream."

I dare say no one in the room would have been disposed to question his argument had there not been then present a commercial traveller from Lancashire, who had made various voyages by sea in the steamers then plying between Liverpool and the Clyde. Indeed, he had just arrived in the steamer *Superb*, and having encountered very rough weather on the passage, he was prepared to repudiate altogether the dangers which our skipper

had said would be the lot of any person who encountered a storm at sea in a vessel propelled by steam. Although the waves, especially about the Mull of Cantyre, were very rough, and dashed against the sides and over all parts of the *Superb*, he said her paddle-boxes were uninjured, and her machinery never stopped, nor was any portion of the wheels in any way disturbed.

But these facts, so specifically stated by the Lancashire traveller, and the equally convincing ones that the steamers *Robert Burns* and *Eclipse* had been running on the same line with the *Superb* for five years, winter and summer, with success, and likewise free from any of the disastrous consequences so vividly impressed on Captain Rough-head's imagination, did not change his opinion. Facts, though stubborn things, were not to be opposed to his practical experience at sea; and although he could not give a single instance where steamers had suffered in the manner he described, he would persist in asking the traveller, "Whar wu'd ye be if the boxes were smashed, and the wheel shaft broken wae the sea rushing through the hole o' the shaft? Answer that if ye can!"

"Well," said the traveller, "it does not prove that your arguments are sound even if I cannot say where I should be in such a contingency; but may

I ask where you would be if the masts of your vessel were blown over the side, and their wreck started a butt in her planks, or the waves smashed in her hatches ? ”

Now, as this was a more appropriate inquiry, and more easily answered than the question which a null-headed “philosopher” put to some young ladies, who, when pushed to answer their inquiry as to how many herrings he would get for a penny halfpenny if a dozen cost a shilling, asked them what would be the cost of a cart of turnips, if a cart of potatoes cost twenty shillings ; our skipper was obliged to admit that the vessels, sailing as well as steam, would both, under the circumstances contemplated, be very likely to go to the bottom.

Nevertheless, Captain Roughhead held to the point that propulsion by steam was very unnatural, as well as very dangerous, even in rivers, but especially at sea. Nor did the further facts that the *James Watt* and *Soho* had for some years successfully maintained the service between Leith and London, superseding the once celebrated Leith smacks, make any impression on him, although the line was then about to be increased by the addition of the *United Kingdom*, of 120 ft. in length, and 200 h.p., the wonder of the period. Indeed, so far from convincing him of the advantages afforded by

steam vessels and their safety, these facts only tended to confirm his prejudices against them. We have all heard what the man did who was convinced against his will.

Nor was Captain Roughhead any exception in his opinions to those which at that period prevailed amongst seafaring men, including admirals, post captains, and even Lords of the Admiralty. Steam was in their opinion a precarious and dangerous mode of propulsion; and certainly, when one recollects the noise which it made when the salt-water crust was being blown from the boilers as the steamers lay alongside a wharf after the completion of their trip, it is not surprising that such doubts and fears should have so long prevailed.

But whatever suspicion may have been entertained against the safety of steam-engines working in vessels built of wood, the mere suggestion of *iron* being in future used for the construction of steamers, about which the traveller read a paragraph in a newspaper he had that day received from home, raised a howl of derision in the commercial-room of the Wheat Sheaf which made the tumblers ring again.

"Iron float!" exclaimed an old fellow, whom the company present looked upon as an authority in shipbuilding, and as such in the laws of flotation.

"Lor', bless you hearts, what are we coming to? What next and next?" he asked, with the gravity of a judge. "Whoever heard of iron floating? Why, it's against natur'!"

And when the traveller suggested that iron *might* be put together in such a form as to float more buoyantly than wood, the company laughed still more derisively, while our skipper broadly hinted that the man from Lancashire "Mun be a born idiot, who oucht ne'er to hae been out o' Bedlam."

## CHAPTER VI.

### OUR SKIPPER VENTURES A PASSAGE IN A STEAMER.

**S**OMETIMES necessity overcomes our most determined resolutions. Captain Roughhead had resolved never to put his foot on board a steamer. Nor had he done so up to the time to which I now refer; but as the stage-coach had been reduced to such straits that it only made a journey to Greenock twice a week, he would be obliged, so as to reach that place on the following day, either to take a passage in one of the "fire boats" or hire a special land conveyance, which he could not afford to do.

It was evidently a sore trial to him to give me—on the very evening, too, when he had been denouncing steamers—orders to get up early on the following morning, and learn when they sailed for Greenock.

"I dinna like it, Tommy, but ye mun get up by five o'clock, and gang awa' down tae the Broomielaw and see when they blow-ups sail; and see if you can fin' out the steady anes. Ask about the puffing

high-pressure anes, for we mun avoid them. Mind that, for if onything goes wrang wi' them, the Lord hae mercy on a' the leeving things on board. We wu'd be sent tae eternity in a jiffy, and that's a verra awfu' thocht."

Of course all I could do was to discover the time of sailing of the different boats, which I ascertained from a number of boards stuck up at the corner of the quay at the foot of Jamaica Street. Each steamer had a board of her own, whereon her name was painted, and below it, in sliding pieces of wood, were specified the ports for which she was destined and the hours of departure. Finding that the *Rothesay Castle* started at 10 a.m. for Bowling, Dumbarton, Greenock, Gourock, Dunoon, and Rothesay, with goods and passengers, I announced the fact to Captain Roughhead before he was out of bed, and as she was advertised to carry goods as well as passengers, he arrived at the conclusion that she must be a slow and safe boat, and could not be a "high-pressure" one, and, therefore, he resolved to trust himself in her for a passage to Greenock.

To those of my readers who know what the Clyde is now, with its quay walls and vast shipbuilding establishments extending on either side of its banks for five or six miles below the Broomielaw Bridge, I may explain that the river was then a limp



stream, almost as silvery as it had been in its original state. The quay walls were then confined to the city side, and did not extend more than a quarter, or at most half a mile below the bridge, the arches of which, by the way, had their base surrounded by a ridge of irregular and very slippery stones, across which adventurous boys made their way in search of eels and small fish. There was a flight of steps close to the bridge, where the fishing vessels landed their cargoes, and below them a small wooden jetty, from which the steamboats plied.

The opposite shore, where are now erected stupendous quay walls with vast sheds, as well as a commodious dock, where vessels of the largest description now lie afloat, was a verdant lawn sloping down to the edge of the river, two thatched salmon fishing huts stood on its banks—one on the present site of the dock at the end of a very pretty green lane; the other about a couple of miles further down the river at Govan, then one of the prettiest rural villages I ever saw. I shall never forget its tall church spire, imbedded amidst a cluster of trees, and in front its well-kept lawn.

Having had a substantial breakfast, the skipper and I left the Wheat Sheaf in time for the steamer, parting from the widow (I wonder what his wife

would have said had she known it) as if he was about to embark on so perilous an expedition that he was not likely to have the pleasure of meeting her again, or enjoying the good things of her famous hostelry.

When we reached the *Rothsay Castle*, she had accumulated more steam than was necessary to start with, and began blowing it off with a loud, whirling and wheezing scream, to the horror of the skipper, just as he stepped on board.

"Don't like this, Tommy," he remarked to me, as we crossed the gangway. "She's, after a', a reg'lar high pressure ane, in spite o' her carrying goods—a thorough blower-up. Why didn't you speer mare partic'larly about her?"

Of course I had no means of inquiry; the board told me nothing beyond her name and destination; and the fact that she was to carry cargo as well as passengers had induced Captain Roughhead to believe that if any steamer was safe, he had a right to expect that the *Rothsay Castle* would be safer than the other more modern boats which professed to make the passage in less time.

But our skipper was evidently very uneasy in his mind, and immediately he got on board he took a seat on the taffrail, as far away from the engines as possible, so that if the boilers did burst he would

be ready to jump overboard and swim for his life; and there he sat until the *Rothsay Castle* reached Greenock.

#### RETURN IN SAFETY TO GREENOCK.

On our arrival, Conchie welcomed him with the information that the *A rethusa* had been hauled from the grid-iron, where she had been placed for a couple of tides to examine her bottom, to her loading berth, and that she had not sustained any damage to her copper from grounding at the Cambraes, which he thought "very funny;" and that the Laird, who had returned by post-chaise to Greenock in the course of the previous evening, had not said anything to him about getting on shore, or made any inquiries as to how she got there, which, in the opinion of Conchie, was still more funny. But, strange as it may seem, this satisfactory information only drew from our skipper a growl directed against his only mate, as if he had been the sole cause of the brigantine getting on shore.

Is it not an extraordinary fact that men in supreme authority never do see that they themselves can possibly be the cause of any mischief? It is invariably the fault of their subordinates; and in the case of skippers, the weather, or the winds,

or the charts, or the tides, or their mates, or their men, are invariably to blame. But I thought at the time that it was very hard upon Conchie to be blamed, as our skipper's growl insinuated, for having had anything to do with running the *Arethusa* on shore, as I knew that it was done during his watch below, and that he was in bed at the time.

However, Conchie took the skipper's growling all in good part. *He* knew that no harm was meant by it; and I dare say he felt that the skipper may have adopted that mode of receiving the information as a means of showing that the subject was not a congenial one to him, and that the accident might not have happened if he, on that occasion, had taken fewer glasses of whisky-and-water.

#### SAIL FOR ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND.

In due time the *Arethusa* received her cargo on board, which consisted of a flooring of coals and bar iron in the lower hold, and above that various casks, with numerous bales and cases of dry goods, part of which consisted of the Greenock draper's out-of-date stock of prints, dresses, and other articles of haberdashery, which having gone out of fashion with the ladies of Greenock, might suit the less exacting tastes of the ladies of Newfoundland.

Having received our final instructions from the Laird, who had remained at Greenock to superintend the business of the *Arethusa*, and see to her due despatch—as prudent, careful shipowners always did in those days—we set sail on our foreign voyage from the “tail of the bank,” a well-known anchorage ground, off the harbour of Greenock.

I do not recollect anything of unusual interest happening on our voyage to St. John’s, except that the *Arethusa* knocked about a good deal when we got off the Mull of Cantyre; but she knocked about a great deal more when we reached the Atlantic Ocean, where she broke a good deal of crockery, and shipped a great many green seas, causing me to be very sick and very uncomfortable.

I then discovered that a seafaring life was not so very charming as I had anticipated, and when “Slushey” gave me a belabouring for tumbling into the lee-scuppers with a basin of pea-soup which he had entrusted me to convey from the galley to the cabin, I really did think that I should have been somewhat more comfortable than where I was had I remained in the Manse, even with the schoolmaster’s strap still vividly in my recollection.

However, as Captain Roughhead forgave me, though the cook never did, and Conchie only said, when he saw me sprawling amidst the broken

crockery and pea-soup in the lee-scuppers, "how very funny," I soon got over this, my first disaster at sea; indeed, the cook got the worst of it, for the skipper was very angry at the loss of his soup, and called the cook many hard and nasty names for having entrusted it to my care, instead of fetching it from the galley himself, when he saw that the *Arethusa* was tumbling about at such a rate in the heavy sea-way.

#### A DISSERTATION ON THE VALUE OF SEA-LEGS.

I think now, on mature consideration, that our skipper was right in this case. To convey in safety along the deck in a stiff breeze of wind, when the sea is washing into the waist, and when the vessel is rolling a dozen degrees on either side, a tureen or kid of hot soup is a feat which only an experienced nautic, with his legs in their prime, can be expected to accomplish with success.

I question if I could do it now. Just let any landsman consider for a moment what is necessary to command success. Suppose a flat dish like a kid, without any handles, full of hot soup. To carry it on an even keel it must be held firmly by both hands, with the forefingers of each hand below the dish, and the thumbs on the rim. The hands, fingers, and thumbs of the person carrying it being

thus fully employed, he must depend entirely on his legs to convey him along the slippery deck from the galley-door to the companion watch, and if some one is not there to receive it, he must get it down a steep pair of stairs into the cabin as best he can.

Now, when the rolling of the vessel is considered, and the difficulty of maintaining your own equilibrium, that difficulty is very materially increased when you have not merely to maintain yourself in an upright position, but to balance with your arms and hands a large flat dish with its hot contents, ready at any moment, and with the slightest motion from the horizontal, to lap over the edges and burn your fingers, if they do not scald your person. My readers, be they philosophers, or mathematicians, or sailors, or even cooks, will, therefore, concur with me in the opinion that when "Slushey" gave me, a boy of fourteen years of age, and without any sea-legs, so very difficult a duty to perform, he displayed an amount of thoughtlessness which was very properly reprimanded by our skipper, to say nothing about the loss of his soup and the destruction of the Laird's crockeryware.

But if it was not that such a system of education might prove rather too expensive, I should teach every youth, destined to follow the sea, the art of

conveying along the deck, in a flat dish, liquid of some sort, but should require it to be cold, in case of accident; it would give him a thorough knowledge of how to use his legs to the very best advantage, and that is a matter of far greater importance than most people suppose. Indeed, a thorough command over the legs gives a sailor full scope for the exercise of his arms, so that he is not merely at all times, and on all occasions, ready for the work required of him on board merchant vessels, but especially so on board of men-of-war; sailors, when trained being the most useful and expert gunners, and in certain descriptions of manœuvring and fighting on shore they are far before the best drilled soldiers.

*Sailors*: not those fellows called "ordinary seamen"—ordinary enough, in all conscience who, as a rule, are nothing but loafers—but well-trained A.B.'s, who have faithfully served an apprenticeship at sea, are also handy fellows in various other ways. They make first-rate miners, for they can bend their backs and work in holes where no soldier could stoop to get into; they are well adapted for plumbers or slaters, as they can run along the tops of houses without being giddy! And do not all my readers know that when parish authorities—who are always very shrewd, if not always very learned men—re-



quire to have anything done to the tops of their steeples, they invariably employ sailors for the job when they can get them. Nor are they less handy as painters, for they have a good deal of that sort of work at sea; and they are first-rate reapers, being short, muscular, limber, and so merry, that they keep all around them in good temper. A merry fellow will do twice the work of a sulky, lounging one, and he encourages others to follow his example.

Thorough-trained sailors are also joiners and carpenters in their way, for they frequently build their sea-chests; they are likewise tailors, for they make their own clothes, especially their inexpressibles, which is indeed the chief article of their attire; musicians, as most of them can play the fiddle; and cooks, for many of them have to learn the culinary art when serving their apprenticeship; and when hard pressed for a job, no men are more admirably adapted for bricklayers' labourers, as they can run along with a hod of lime on their shoulders to tops of high ladders, traverse narrow planks, and carry their burdens to places that would terrify most landmen. There are, in fact, so many employments to which they can readily turn their hands, besides manning our merchant ships in peace, and fighting our naval battles, that I wonder our statesmen do not turn their attention with more earnestness than

they have hitherto *done* to the creation of a far greater number of seamen than we now possess, for in such a country as this we could have no more useful or valuable men amongst our industrial classes.

I cannot say much about their scholarship or of their book-learning, as hardly any of them could read, much less write, when I made my first voyage to sea, or for a long time afterwards ; but that was the fault of the State in not affording them the means of education, and that was the main reason, before we repealed our Navigation Laws, that foreign sailors, especially mates and masters, had so great an advantage over us. They are rather better now, and our officers are all that could be desired, but our sailors have still in that respect a very great deal to learn.

#### THE "ARETHUSA" ARRIVES AT ST. JOHN'S.

As the *Arethusa* was anything but a fast craft, and as the winds were not very favourable, we were thirty-five days on our passage from Greenock to St. John's. Nothing further worthy of record occurred on the voyage. The routine of every day's work was much alike—washing decks, setting, shortening, or trimming sails, varied by the duties of splicing and serring ropes, making mats and spunyarn, paint-

ing, tarring, and mending sails. There was the usual amount of growling, smoking, and drinking, of which our skipper took rather too much when he had nothing of importance to do, but never otherwise, I must state to his credit. Once I remember, he lost his balance and tumbled down the companion hatch, which Conchie said was "very funny," considering that our skipper had had more than fifty years experience afloat, and consequently ought to have had at all times and in all places a better command of his sea-legs than he had on that occasion. Now and again we spoke an outward-bound vessel that had left the shores of Great Britain long after we did; and once a homeward-bound one belonging to Greenock, by which we were enabled to send a letter to the Laird, written by me, to the skipper's dictation. And once, I recollect, we caught a shark, by means of a piece of pork, on a large hook, which afforded great delight to all on board. But it was weary work, and we were all glad when we sighted the land.

Everybody knows that Newfoundland is an island belonging to Great Britain in the North Atlantic Ocean, off the East Coast of North America, and that its shores, of nearly 1,000 miles in length, form the eastern boundary of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Nor need I tell my readers that St.

John's, where the *Arethusa* had now arrived, is the capital of that important island.

But everybody may not know that the coast contiguous to St. John's and around the roadstead is majestic, wild, and grand beyond description, and nobody till now knows that it struck me—a matter perhaps, of not much consequence—with awe, mingled with delight, when I first beheld it.

Land of any kind, after a long voyage, is a pleasing sight; but to view for the first time, after being thirty-five days at sea, cooped up in a small craft, with nothing to eat but salt, very salt beef and hard, mouldy biscuits, for which I had lost all my boyish charms, such magnificent scenery as was presented on our approach to the shore would have made a poet of me had there been any poetry in me, which I think there is. However, as I did not write a poem on the subject at the time, nor at any time afterwards, and as I am too old to write one now, I must leave that beautiful scene to the imagination of those of my readers who have not visited St. John's.

The harbour is one of the finest in the world; it lies between two mountains, the eastern points of these forming on either side the boundary of the safe and deep entrance, called the "Narrows." The anchorage within is excellent, the bay having, over

a large portion of its extent, depths of water ranging from three to twelve fathoms. The roadstead is safe from all winds, and, with suitable fortifications at the approach, could be made impregnable. The mountains by which the town and harbour are surrounded are rent in many parts, forming very lofty and precipitous cliffs, which, in some places rise almost perpendicular from the sea, with deep water at their base. Between the cliffs are deep chasms, where vegetation is luxuriant, though frequently rank, and beyond are many hills and valleys covered with pine wood, and a few other forest trees.

There was nothing in the town of St. John itself worthy of special notice. A long, straggling street ran nearly parallel to the beach on the north side of the port, where there were a multitude of small wharves, or wooden jetties, chiefly used for the landing, curing, and shipment of fish. The houses had been principally built of wood; but about ten years before I first visited St. John's a great fire had destroyed most of them, and at the time to which I refer a great many of these had been reconstructed of less perishable materials. A few of them were well built of hewn stone. The export trade of the place consisted then as it does now, chiefly in the shipment of dried fish, caught to an enormous

extent on the banks of Newfoundland, and of seal, whale, and cod oil, and of such was the cargo which the *Arethusa* took on board for Lisbon. There were no doubt a good many other articles besides, such as tobacco, cigars, and various other odds and ends which had been imported from the United States, West Indies, and elsewhere, bearing a low, and in some cases almost nominal duty, which usually commanded very high prices at the port whither we were destined. I had no means of knowing if these were shipped on freight on the consigner's account, or were purchases made on account of the Laird for sale at Lisbon, or on joint account for him and our skipper, or whether they were Captain Roughhead's sole venture ; but most of these I know were stowed in the cabin, or in a little store-room in the after peak below it, and were under his own special charge.

#### PASSAGE TO LISBON.

I enjoyed the passage from St. John's to Lisbon, much more than I had done the one to St. John's. The weather on the whole was much finer. I had got over my sea-sickness, and was much more master of my legs when the *Arethusa* knocked about than I had been, and though the cook did not again test my capabilities in that respect with another

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basin of hot soup, I could carry dishes from the galley to the cabin without making anything like a thorough smash of them ; so that I was getting somewhat proficient in this necessary accomplishment at sea.

I had also learned to go aloft, and could furl the royal in moderate weather, or assist in the stowing of the jib, foresail, or top-gallant sail ; but I had become especially useful to our skipper in writing down in the log-book what he told me, for, as I have stated, our only mate, Conchie, could not write, so that, altogether, I had become somebody on board, and had privileges afforded to me which sailor-boys very seldom get. Indeed, as I wrote the captain's letters, though he had not many to write, as well as the log, I dare-say he would have dubbed me his "secretary," had he had any idea of the definition of that now well-worn word, by which anyone who writes occasionally for another is now known.


When crossing the Bay of Biscay, the weather was rather rough, and the seas somewhat high, but when we got to the south of it the sea was smooth and the sky cloudless, presenting an appearance of deep blue, through which the stars shone far more brilliantly than ever I had seen them do before, and were far more thickly clustered ; then the weather was so warm that I could sleep on deck all night,

which I had not previously been able to do, and that was a pleasant change from my confined thwartship berth in the little cabin. At times the porpoises sported about us, and the dolphin, with its ever-changing colours, was an object of unusual interest, while the "flying fish," some of which found their way by mishap on board, afforded me no ordinary delight. A sailor's life was then to me one of real enjoyment, and as our skipper was always kind to me, I look back to that period of my life at sea with many pleasing recollections. Passing under the lee of various small islands, whose names I now forget, we soon afterwards made the land of Portugal, with the celebrated hills of Cintra in the distance, about which I had read; and in nineteen days, from the time of leaving St. John's, we anchored in the still more celebrated River Tagus, opposite Belem, so famed in history.



## CHAPTER VII.

### I VISIT LISBON, AND SEE THE LISBOANS.

 HERE are few cities which present a more imposing appearance than Lisbon, as I first saw it from the deck of the *Arethusa*, as she entered the once celebrated, and still beautiful, but then comparatively lifeless Tagus. Erected upon the seven hills which line the right bank of the river, and about nine miles from its entrance, Lisbon, on account of its site, has been considered not unlike Rome ; but in no other respect does it resemble the once proud capital of the ancient world, except that there are in its immediate vicinity various very large buildings, chiefly monasteries and nunneries, crumbling to decay.

With its origin, lost in an antiquity so remote as to be assigned to the period of the wanderings by sea and land of the famous *Ulysses*; and with a name said to have been derived from an Ithacan king almost as famous, the Lisboaans boast of an ancestry who carried on a considerable commercial

intercourse with distant nations for more than a thousand years before the Christian era.

Surrounded, as all records before the dawn of history necessarily are, with a great deal of romance, I shall not invite my readers to follow me in any inquiry as to the state of Lisbon and its commerce in the time of *Ulysses*; but that the city was successfully held by the Phœnicians, Carthagenians, and Romans, and that Julius Cæsar bestowed upon it the rights of a *municipium*, besides other important privileges, are matters of authentic history; while everybody knows, or ought to know, that it was overrun by the Goths under Theodoric, that it passed from him to the Arabs, was conquered by the Spaniards, again reconquered by the Arabs, and that, in 1147, A.D., Alphonsa, first King of Portugal, besieged Lisbon, and captured it, after a terrible massacre of the Moors, in which, by the way, he was assisted by an army of English Christian crusaders on their passage to the Holy Land.

Nor need I remind my readers that it was from Lisbon Vasco de Gama sailed on his perilous voyage to rediscover India, by way of the Cape of Good Hope, and Christianise its people by the conquest of their lands, and the perpetration of the most horrible acts of rapine, plunder, and bloodshed;

or that about 120 years ago (no doubt by way of retribution) this renowned capital was itself reduced to almost a heap of ruins by an earthquake, which swallowed up between 30,000 and 40,000 of its inhabitants, laying waste many of their finest buildings, including the palatial dwellings of its traders with India, whose people Vasco de Gama had (having gone the wrong way to work) failed to Christianise.

I was greatly struck, as all other travellers have been, with the appearance of Lisbon, when viewed from the Tagus; nor was I less surprised with the magnificence of many of its public buildings erected since the earthquake, especially with the *Praca de Commercio*, better known to British sailors as Black Horse Square, from the large bronze equestrian statue of Joseph I., which stands in its centre. Here I landed with Captain Roughhead amidst a number of howling, yelling, bare-legged fellows, who would insist on offering their services to convey us to the office of the consignees of our ship.

I have said that the city was magnificent in appearance, most of the buildings far surpassing in size and grandeur anything I had seen, Glasgow and its Tontine not excepted; but I never trudged through so much dirt and filth as the streets presented which led to the place of business we were

in search of, a very long way distant from where we landed.

#### OUR SKIPPER REQUIRES REFRESHMENT.

I suppose the streets of Lisbon are a great deal cleaner now, but then they seemed to be the only receptacle for all the ashes, and something worse, of all the houses on our line of march. Even our skipper, whose olfactory nerves were not the most sensitive, remarked that the smell and the heat were so overpowering, that he felt they would overcome him unless he had a glass of brandy-and-water. We therefore stumbled into a place which had the appearance of a refreshment-house—at least, it was one where liquor was sold—and having seated ourselves in an adjoining room, he called for a tumbler of his favourite beverage.

The waiter was long in supplying his wants, so long, indeed, that our skipper commenced to swear at our guide—a very foolish operation indeed, for the guide knew as little about the English language as we did of the Portuguese, although he understood we were waiting for liquor of some sort: and expecting to participate, he was ready to do what he could to expedite its delivery. When, however, he was about to perform this charitable mission, the waiter walked into the room with a tray, on

which they stood a lighted candle, and presented it with a polite bow to Captain Roughhead.

"Lor' bless me, what d'as the chiel mean?" exclaimed our skipper, looking at the waiter with intense astonishment as he held before him the tray and the candle. "Brandy! man—brandy-and-water; that's what I want, or I'll gang aff in a faint wi' this awfu' heat;" and he certainly looked as if he would have done so, for the perspiration streamed in torrents from his forehead. 'Gie me the brandy, man, and gin ye hae nae water, for by yeer dirty streets ye seem to be scarce o't, I'll hae onything else to mix wi' it."

But the waiter only bowed, looking with as great amazement at our skipper's antics as he had done at the tray and its contents. At last, with the assistance of our guide, we made him understand that it was not a light, but something to drink that we required, the mistake having arisen from the words light or candle in Portuguese sounding, as I was afterwards informed, not unlike brandy in English.

Having quenched his thirst with a very stiff "caulker," supplying the guide with another almost as stiff, and having evidently satisfied the demands of the waiter, we renewed our walk through still more filthy lanes until we reached the offices of the consignees, one of whom spoke English fluently.

The house to whom the *Arethusa* was consigned had done a good deal of business with our countrymen during the Peninsular War—a war, by the way, which, whatever may have been its results in other respects, had given a considerable impetus to the previously decaying trade of Lisbon. This firm was one of the leading mercantile houses in that city, and having been agents to most of the British transports, and many of the officers under Wellington, its members had reaped a rich harvest from the agency of these vessels and the supply of the different army messes.

Although the course of business had now changed, and many of their former customers lay buried in the pretty churchyard, beneath the tall trees which surround the English chapel, their friends remained in England, and our consignees still carried on a lucrative business, sending to them the wines and fruits of Portugal, and supplying the Lisboans with the manufactures of Great Britain.

As the fish, oil, and other articles constituting the cargo of the *Arethusa* were in good demand, and as our consignees perceived that their sale would yield them a very respectable commission, Captain Roughhead received a hearty welcome—more so than is usually afforded to the skippers of small vessels by the consignees of great mercantile

firms. Indeed, the leading partner invited him to dine at his house at Belem, and, under the impression that I was the skipper's son, he expressed a wish for me to accompany him ; but as Captain Roughhead was not accustomed to mingle in fashionable society, nor accept invitations to dinner parties, and as he doubted, as well he might, if our attire was altogether adapted for such occasions, he, in as polite a manner as his awkward gait would admit of, declined the invitation, at the same time remarking that " he and Tommy wu'd be verra glad to see their orange-groves and gardens ony Sunday when it wu'd be quite convenient for the consignee and his family to receive them," an offer which was at once met by an invitation to luncheon for the following Sunday.

#### PORTUGUESE CUSTOMS AND OFFICIALS.

When the *Arethusa* was moored at the usual place of discharge in the Tagus, off the Customs in Black Horse Square, and duly entered, we commenced to discharge our cargo in native boats, by which it was conveyed to the Custom House quay.

In the discharge, extraordinary caution appeared to be exercised by the officials that no portion of the cargo should be landed unless it paid duty at this official landing-place ; nevertheless, a good

many small articles were despatched from the *Arethusa* which did not go nigh the Custom House. Sometimes a millrea (equivalent to about 4s. sterling) prevented the protector of the revenue placed on board from seeing it if the article was small; but at other times both eyes required to be closed with millreas when it was desirable to land bulkier articles by other means than the Custom House boats.

Portuguese officials are so very clear-sighted, and the atmosphere of Lisbon is so very brilliant, that, indeed, there were occasions when two, or even three millreas over each eye did not prevent them from seeing, and when gold, which was not so opaque, was necessary to close the eyes of the guardians of their country's revenue. Copper was of no use as a non-conductor of light; and these honest men were much too temperate in their habits to be tempted to neglect their duty by a glass or two of grog, as some of our own Custom House officers are said to have been a long time ago, when duties were as high in England as they were, and still are, in all the Portuguese ports.

However, all this was for the benefit of at least one portion of the community. Although the practice prevented Portuguese subjects at large from deriving the benefit of the Customs' receipts on



many articles subject to very high duties, they winked at it. The officials were a large and very influential body of men, who served their country for very low salaries, and as the practice prevailed in almost every branch of the public service, they, from their political influence, were enabled to effectually resist all attempts to reduce the tariff; any reduction, they patriotically argued, could only be for the benefit of foreign importers. Free trade, in their judgment, meant merely free supplies of goods from other countries to ruin their own manufacturers; and how, they enquired, "could any reduction in the duties increase the revenue when the revenue, as it was, never sufficed to meet the expenditure?"

Nor were the officials alone in their political opinions; they were backed by numerous others, especially by the leading merchants, many of whom were said to have made large fortunes by the illicit importation of tobacco, in spite of the farming out of that article, and on numerous other foreign productions subject to exorbitant duties; besides, some of them were manufacturers, and reductions in the tariff on imports would have materially reduced their profits.

Simple-minded people might suppose that all large smuggling transactions would be easily dis-

covered ; but who was to reveal them in Portugal ? Not the merchants themselves, nor the officers of Customs ; nor the heads of departments ; nor even the Cabinet Ministers ; for many of them had their eyes covered to a greater or less extent. Nor could anyone blame their prudence ; for they all accepted office on salaries so low as to be insufficient to maintain them in their respective positions. Consequently they got what they could out of the State, or out of anybody who had dealings with Government. To expect to get business satisfactorily carried on with the Governments of such countries as Portugal, Spain, or Turkey, or with other foreign States, too numerous to mention, without a "perquisite," and sometimes a very costly one, was out of the question. Is it any easier now ?

If you wish to make a road—especially a "tramway"—somebody's eyes must be closed to secure, in the first place, the concession ; and if a railway, the number of eyes and mouths that require to be covered is legion. Should you have an account that is overdue, or any claim requiring settlement, about which the officials see any way open for prevarication, or any excuse for delay, or any reason for deductions, you must make up your mind to give one-fourth, or one-third, or one-half of the amount away, according to circumstances, before you can

hope to receive the remainder. High duties on the one hand, and low-paid officials on the other, are the chief causes of all this fraud and corruption. It is not the men in authority who are so much to blame as the Government, by its unwise laws and stingy and pernicious practices.

Nor are the judges much better than the other officials ; justice there is a thing of price ; and how can we expect it to be otherwise when we know that those who dispense the law—the purity of which is the only sure foundation of a nation's prosperity and the freedom of its people—do not receive salaries superior to those of the upper grades of clerks in the counting-house of a second or third-class merchant.

When will these nations learn the wisdom of the good old maxim—"Do not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out its master's corn?" Under all such laws as those to which I have just referred, the honest masses of the people are impoverished, while the dishonest few grow rich ; and even they do not always thrive on their ill-gotten wealth.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CAPTAIN ROUGHHEAD VISITS BELEM, AND INSPECTS ITS CATHEDRAL.

**T**HE *Arethusa* proceeded with the discharge of her cargo as rapidly as could be expected under a hot sun, lazy Customs' officials, and with crazy boats, to receive and convey it to the official wharf; and as our skipper had had a week of very hard work in pushing on the discharge of the cargo, he resolved to make a whole holiday of the Sunday; a portion of which he and I had been invited to spend at the mansion and in the gardens of our consignee at Belem.

We were up and dressed long before breakfast-time; the skipper in his Sunday suit, consisting of a blue coat with brass buttons and flat short tails; a broad-rimmed hat, with a wide ribbon for its band; a variegated shirt with stripes and flowers, and a white collar, secured in its upright position by a pink neck-tie. His waistcoat was a gorgeous affair of its kind, and his trousers, of yellow nankeen—though a somewhat tight fit for his corpulent body—

were wide in the legs, and in other respects well adapted for a hot climate. I never saw our skipper, before or since, rigged in such gay and smart attire. I put on my best Sunday clothes, which, however, had got somewhat faded by the moisture from the sea, and long confinement in a small sea-chest. After we had had breakfast on board, Joe rowed us down the Tagus in the jolly-boat to Belem, where we landed at a small jetty just above the curious old fort, where all ships make their entries, and receive their clearances for sea.

As we had some hours to spare before luncheon time we strolled into Belem Cathedral, close by—that beautiful building so famous in history wherein Vasco de Gama with the King and Court in gorgeous array had offered such solemn prayers before his departure to discover the rich lands of Cathay. I had read all about it when at school; I could tell Captain Roughhead how that great but cruel navigator had there, in the presence of his Sovereign and a glittering throng of courtiers, invoked the Great Ruler of Nations to favour him on his mission of discovery, so that he might propagate amongst the people of the far and ever-envied East the Christian religion; and how, when he found these lands, and saw they contained much wealth, he forgot his Christianising mission, and plundered and

persecuted the native princes, massacring many of the people in cold blood, all for the sake of obtaining possession of their lands and their "filthy lucre."

But the skipper did not believe me. He could not understand how any man would on such a solemn occasion seek aid from the Ruler of the Destinies of Nations to civilise and Christianise when he only meant rapine and plunder and murder.

"Na, na, Tommy, ye mun hae read history a' wrang; for e'en Dick Turpin himsel', much less Rab Roy, wu'dna hae been guilty o' sic awfu' deeds as ye tell me aboot. Na, na, human natur' in ony form is na jist sae bad as tae gang tae kirk and pray that power and opportunities may be afforded tae plunder ither folks lawn', and cut their throats in cauld bluid for the sake o' their guids and siller."

Were it not that highly civilised nations, when they declare war, still seek power from on high to "burn, plunder, and destroy," I should have been disposed to think that Captain Roughhead was not very far wrong when he questioned the accuracy of my historical readings about Vasco de Gama; but, alas! they are too true. From that same splendid cathedral those hypocritical supplications were made four centuries ago, amidst the most gorgeous pageantries of a gorgeous age, and by a people who then considered themselves the most civilised and

refined of nations ; and those deeds of infamy followed which have left a dark page in the history of Portugal, casting a gloomy hue over the discoveries of its greatest navigator.

I was so much struck by this truly grand and still beautiful cathedral, and so fascinated with the recollections of the historical associations in connection with it, that our skipper had some difficulty in getting me away from the site of scenes so startling and infamous, especially as at that moment the rich sounds of a magnificent organ were gathering the people to morning service, and just at the moment when sweet voices were heard from the choir in the distance.

“Come awa', Tommy, come awa',” impatiently cried our skipper as I lingered behind him ; “a' that screeching and tha'e solemn tunes are only Papish mummary. They're no like the singing in your faether's kirk ; the heart's there—there's nane here ; and it mun be sae if what ye tell me about Captain Vasca is richt. Come awa', Tommy, come awa', this is no' the House o' God, however gran' it may be.”

#### CAPTAIN ROUGHHEAD MEETS WITH A MISHAP.

Half-an-hour's walk brought us to the mansion of our consignee, but it was so large and stately a

building that we were afraid to enter its porch. However, a couple of Gallegos—men from Galicia, who do the principal portion of the menial work at Lisbon, and who were carrying barrels of water on their shoulders for the inmates—seeing our difficulty, sent one of the household servants to us. This man evidently knew who we were, and having been made aware that we were expected to luncheon, threw the hall door wide open, and with a bow, and a hardly suppressed grin on his countenance, motioned us to enter.

Our skipper did not seem to be quite sure that we had got to the right house, and stood wiping his feet for a much longer time than seemed to be necessary on the door-mat, then drawing a silk handkerchief from his pocket, he dusted with it his clothes and the tops of his shoes, and having done so, wiped the perspiration away from his forehead and face, an operation which streaked his ruddy countenance like the skin of a zebra, and caused the footman to grin more openly. In fact, the dust from the handkerchief when thus applied gave our skipper a very extraordinary appearance, although his naturally red face with the black stripes over it was quite in harmony with the rest of his full dress attire.

But the grandeur of the hall was not the only



cause of his hesitation in entering, for, as its floor was of marble, as bright and slippery as clean-swept ice, he did not seem disposed to trust himself upon it. Mustering up courage, however, he entered, handing the footman his broad-rimmed hat, and having another rub of his forehead with his dusty handkerchief. These highly-polished floors are critical footways to persons not accustomed to them, and this fact seemed to be well known to Captain Roughhead. Slipping at every step he felt that he must come down; he was not wrong, for down he came with a thump on his stern just as the footman opened the door of the room, and announced to the family circle, who were assembled within, the arrival of "Senhor Capitan Rathead and Mouchi Mister Tonnie."

Our consignee and the members of the household, amongst whom were some very fashionably-dressed young ladies, rushed to the door to see if the "capitan" had hurt himself, and to assist him in getting up, but while our skipper assured the ladies that bodily there "wus na' onything verra far wrang," as he had fallen on the softest part of his person, he did not seem disposed to rise in their presence, and looked as if he would rather be introduced to them a little later on in the day.

We were all at first greatly puzzled to make out

why the skipper continued to sit where he had fallen, and it was only after the ladies had retired that he whispered to me, "Tommy, I feel thae marble stanes very cauld, and I'm thinking that my breeks ha'e got the warst o' the tum'le. Jist you look behin' and see if they're hale and soun'."

It did not require much examination to confirm our skipper's suspicions. Lifting one of the broad flat tails of his blue coat, I saw that his nankeens had a slit in them which evidently extended a good way beyond that portion of his person which was then visible.

Our host seeing the difficulty induced the skipper to rise, when the ladies left and the drawing-room door had been shut. He then got up, though very reluctantly, and walked away to another room, holding his flat coat skirts with both his hands close to his stern to prevent the rent from being seen, to change his inexpressibles, or to have the damages repaired.

There were no trousers in the house that would fit our skipper's Dutch build; many pairs were tried, but as they all stuck fast at that part of his person where the breach had been made, there was no help for it but to hand over the nankeens to a tailor who lived close by, who did the job work, in his line, for the household.

The tailor must have been very expert and efficient in his handicraft, for within half an hour he returned the nankeens "doubled" at that part where the breach had been made, so that if our skipper again met with a similar misfortune they would not have split at that very awkward part of his person.

"Weel, Sir," said our skipper to the consignee, "I think I'm a' ready noo to appear afore the leddies; but as I am rather nervous after the coup I ha'e had on the marble flair, ye'll maybe obleege me wae a wee drap o' brandy-and-water to pit my nerves in order—jist the wee'st drap, and plenty o' water in it, for I'm no accustomed tae strang drink in the morning."

The consignee seemed readily to know what was really required, and having given his order in Portuguese, the butler soon came back with a large tumbler full to the brim, and with its contents of so brown a colour that Captain Roughhead's expressed wish to have only "a very sma' drap o' brandy wae the water" did not seem to have been attended to.

Nevertheless, he gulphed it off at one swing, not once drawing his breath, and, wiping his lips with the cuff of his coat, declared himself ready to face the "leddies."

But he was ill at ease; the grand room and

elegantly-dressed company, though all in morning attire, somewhat bewildered him.

Ten or twelve persons sat down to luncheon. I had never previously seen anything like the number of good things that were there presented for our choice, not even in the window of a confectioner's shop. But, somehow or other, my usual excellent appetite failed me on that occasion, nor did our skipper seem more disposed to partake of the many choice dishes presented to him. He had, however, a sip or two of the rich wines, smacked his lips over the champagne, and partook of just another "sma' drap o' coniac; fine, pure stuff, as mild," he confidentially whispered to the young lady who sat next to him, as "yee'r mither's milk."

With one exception besides our skipper and myself, the company consisted of the family circle, and one or two relatives residing in the neighbourhood. The exception was almost as great a contrast to the rest of the company as Captain Roughhead himself, only he was more polished; and he was evidently a frequent visitor, from the manner in which he was addressed and the free use he made of everything on the table—in a word, he was quite at home.

"Captain Dryden," said our host, addressing this personage across the table, when our repast was

nearly finished, "I should have introduced you to Captain Roughhead before. My friend, Captain Dryden—Captain Roughhead of the *Arethusa*," nodding to them both as he spoke, and sipping a glass of wine. "It's entirely my fault; you ought to have known each other before. But really," he added, I think rather maliciously, "my friend here," directing his attention to our skipper, "when he entered the room, was evidently a little put about by his mishap, and did not then seem to care about being introduced to anyone."

A titter ran round the table at this reference to our skipper's misfortune, for the ladies had all ascertained its result and the reason why luncheon had been delayed. It was therefore too bad to remind them of it before the skipper, who would, no doubt, have blushed had his countenance not already been so reddened with the sun, *et cetera*, and so streaked with the dust from his handkerchief that a blush would have made no impression upon it.

"Captain Roughhead, Captain Dryden, here's to you both," said our host, filling this time a bumper of Collare's red wine, and requesting them to follow his example. "May you know more of each other. How would England's Mercantile Marine get on without such men as you in the service?"

The two captains bowed to each other, filled their glasses, and then drank to our host and the rest of the company, the reference to Captain Roughhead's value in the Merchant Service of Great Britain having restored the usual equilibrium of his temper, which had been somewhat unsettled by the rather pointed notice to the breach in his nankeens.

THE ORANGE GROVES, WHERE OUR SKIPPER MET  
MR. FARQUHAR, WHO RELATES HIS GRIEVANCES.

Soon after the ladies had retired to the drawing-room, or to their usual avocations on a Sunday afternoon, the two captains found their way to the gardens and orange groves; and when our host informed them that as the mail for England sailed on the following morning, and he had various despatches to send by her, we were very glad to be left to ourselves. So far as regards the ladies, we saw no more of them. They had performed their part in receiving our skipper and myself, and no doubt, from what they saw of us, they were very glad to get quit of us.

The orange groves about the house were beautiful, and the large gardens beyond were as pretty as gardens can be laid out in the Portuguese fashion. After strolling about them for some time, we met the head-gardener in his holiday attire, for he

himself never worked on Sunday, nor allowed any one under him to do so when he could prevent it. He was a grey-haired, soldier-looking man. Captain Dryden knew him well, and accosting him with, "Fine afternoon, Mr. Farquhar" (his name and reply, as well as his appearance, at once revealing the fact that he was a Scotchman), he returned the friendly nod and remarked:—

"Ou'y it's a fine afternoon, captain; the're a' fine afternoons in this kintry about this season o' the year."

"Verra hot," said the captain. "Want rain for the gardens, don't you?"

"Ou'y," replied the gardener, "it's aye verra hot about this time o' the year, as ye o'cht tae ken, Captain Dryden, after yee'r lang experience o' the climate and seasons o' Portugal. As tae rain, the leddies are aye saying, like yeersel' that we want rain—that the kintry wants rain, and they often complain about it—but when it rains, which it dis at times, as ye ken, in awfu' plumps, they want sunshine. In truth, they dinna ken whut they want; but God ken's best how to water His ain' gardin. He sends sunshine and rain, jist as He sees the soil and the climate want it, and dis the wark a great deal better than we wud dae it oursel's had we the watering o' the airth. Gee'n that was

allowed to us, some folk wu'd want sunshine, ither's rain, and nae doubt there wu'd be some folk wha wu'd like to see it snawing out here in the hot months o' June and July. They wu'd na mind the gardins and the flowers, and the orange blossom, or the vines, sae lang as the snaw suited their ain' wants. It wu'd be a' for ourselves, each individually, gie'n we had the controul o' the elements."

There was no answer to Mr. Farquhar's reasoning, and though evidently a very dry mortal, and not prone to make new acquaintances, it at once became apparent that he was a man so much after Captain Roughhead's own heart that, had there been a tavern close at hand, I dare say he would there and then have invited Mr. Farquhar to adjourn and have a caulker.

But as there was not, they had a long chat amongst the orange groves and shrubbery without the caulker.

"And what pairt o' Scotland may ye be frae?" inquired our skipper. "Gin it's no' tak'ing a liberty in speering, considering our short acquaintance; but I can see ye'er frae the north o' our island?"

"Inverness," replied the gardener, somewhat curtly.

"And what brocht ye' out here, may I speer?"



"Soldiering," said the gardener.

"Sodgerin'?" repeated our skipper, resolved to have a good deal more information out of Mr. Farquhar than that gentleman at first seemed disposed to afford. "Sodgerin' and gard'nin' dinna aften gang taegither, and ye mun hae been weel trained some time o' your life to hae made sic' a beautifu' gardin as this."

The favorable allusion to the fine order in which the garden was kept, drew out Mr. Farquhar to a greater length than he at first seemed disposed to go; and when he got into what was evidently an old groove, he gave us a longish yarn.

"Weel," replied Mr. Farquhar, "I cam' oot here wi' Wellington mair than threty years ago, and though I ha'e aye been thinkin' about gawin' back tae Scotland, I hae ne'er been able to manage it."

All this tickled our skipper's curiosity to have further particulars. "So yee'l hae been through a' the Peninsula war?" he inquiringly remarked.

"That I ha'e," replied Mr. Farquhar, "and muckle guid I got frae it. Nathing but fighting and starvation; and as to prise money"—this was evidently a sore point with him—"I ne'er got a brown bawbie. It wus aye said that there was a guid bit o' siller due to the regiment to which I belanged; but, though the captain there," pointing

to Captain Dryden, "geed himsel' a great deal o' trouble—for which I am muckle obleeged to him—he ne'er could get ony answer frae our consul, or e'en frae our Minister, except that they didna ken onything about it. I aye thocht that they were sent here to look after the interests o' the King's subjects, but they wu'd only laugh at ye gee'n ye wur to say as muckle. Maybe," continued Mr. Farquhar, warming with his subject, "it's no' their business to look after the collection o' prise money. But when a freen o' mine—a coontrymon o' our ain—wha had supplied the Government o' Portugal wae a cargo o' the best Scotch coals, and wanted payment, the clerks at the offices laughed at him; and when somebody tel't him that he wudna get paid unless he fee'd them, he went awa' tae our consul, wha only laughed at him tae, and said he had nae time to attend to sic' matters, though my freen tel't me that he saw him the same afternoon wae a lot o' folk at a garden-party amusing himsel'. I ken what it is to be sent twa and frae the Legation and Consulate. I ha'e been at them baith often enough to speer about my prise money, but a' to nae purpose."

And here Mr. Farquhar poured forth his wrongs and the "worthlessness" of British representatives abroad with a volubility that surprised our skipper,

who had at first taken him for one of those douce, quiet countrymen of his own, out of whom little can be got, except when some secret spring is touched, or they have some wrongs to be redressed.

"I ha'e more than aince gane," continued Mr. Farquhar, "resolved to see our Minister himsel'. I ha'e ne'er been able to see onybody at the Legation, except a porter, wha could na speak a wurd o' English, to speer about my prise money; but I micht as weel hae tried to see King George the Third, and I was tel't the thing was a'together oot o' the question. At last I tramped awa' doon to the quay side to see our Consul, whom I had only aince been able to see afore, but this time I was tel't that he was ou'er muckle engaged to see me. Now, I thocht that very strange, for I could hear an unco' lood snoorin' in his room, for the door was a wee bit open, and I could swear it was the Consul. I ken't the soond o' his voice weel enough; for besides hae'ing talked wae him afore, I had heard him often enough bargaining wae the fish wives down in the market place. There was nae mistaking his snore ony mair than his voice, which was a very rough and loud one. And it wus the case, for after waiting twa long hours, he saw me; but he may jist as weel no' hae seen me. By waiting to see him I lost an afternoon's wark; and he only

glowre'd, and asked what business I had to come and bother him again when he had gee'n me his answer afore. But as I had lost the best part o' the day's wark, I wus determined to get something out o' aine or the ither, so awa' back I trudged to the Minister, and after waiting an hour at the door I saw him, but that was a'. He wu'd na stop half a minute to speak to me, except to say that he had nae time, as he had an important meeting to attend. And what dae ye think that important meeting was?" continued Mr. Farquhar, in great disgust. "Why, he went straicht awa' in his carriage tae the bull fecht, where my son Sammy saw him flirting wae a lot o' ladies in the boxes! Warse than the Consul, for he didna tell a lee about whar he was gaing when he said he was very busy."

"Ne'er mind," said our skipper, in a consoling tone, "Yee'l get justice some day or ither."


But I never heard that he did; and whether Mr. Farquhar had any real claim for prize money or otherwise, or had any right to trouble the Minister or Consul about such matters, there can be no doubt of the fact that, as a rule, when any British subject required redress for substantial wrongs abroad, and hoped to obtain it through the influence or instrumentality of the representatives of his nation, he may, in the words of the honest gardener

“whustle for it till his throttle’s dry, and whustle again and again, but naething wul’ be din for him.”

And here Mr. Farquhar’s antecedents may be briefly told. He had been a gardener in his youth ; but tempted by the prospect of the prize money, which he never got, and the “glories of war,” which he found to be all moonshine and something worse, he had enlisted in a Highland regiment destined for the Peninsula war. When that was over, he had obtained his discharge at Lisbon, having been previously married there to the widow of a comrade who had died in the passage out, and turned his attention to the trade in which he had been brought up. He found ready employment in the neighbourhood of that city, and step by step he had risen by his knowledge, temperate habits, and industry, to the position he held when I met him, which was a very good one compared to soldiering.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CAPTAIN DRYDEN AND HIS ANTECEDENTS.

APTAIN DRYDEN'S antecedents resembled in one respect those of Mr. Farquhar. He, too, had been brought to Lisbon by the Peninsula war, but in the capacity of master of a small transport, belonging to Shields. He was himself a Shields man, and had been brought up in the coal and Baltic trades. After making various voyages to Lisbon with coal and other rough commissariat stores, his vessel was unfortunately lost on the Cascaes rocks, at the entrance to the Tagus, where she became a total wreck. Having formed a few acquaintances at Lisbon on his previous voyages, he resolved to remain there and enter into a shipchandlery business with a Portuguese, who had previously supplied his own and other British vessels with their stores. After making a little money he settled at Belem, where he acted as an assistant to the Consulate by reporting British ships as they entered or cleared at the Fort, close to the entrance of the Tagus, where all vessels were obliged to bring up

to be boarded by the Customs and Sanitary authorities. Captain Dryden further looked after any wrecks of British vessels on that part of the coast, or any waifs of the ocean presumed to be British property. Now and again he rendered some little assistance to the captains and officers of our ships of war, which have so long made the Tagus a rendezvous. At the time to which I refer, and for many years afterwards, he was a well-known and not an unimportant personage at Belem. Most of the merchants resident there had him frequently to dinner at their houses. He had, consequently, become much more polished in his manners than Shields' skippers usually were or are, and had lost all their peculiar dialect, though retaining, when he met men of his own class, much of their jovialty.

I shall never forget Captain Roughhead's look of delight when he ascertained, just before we were about to leave the orange groves, that Captain Dryden was from Shields, his own native place; and the feeling was reciprocal, as he there and then insisted that our skipper should accompany him to his "cabin," a pretty little cottage which stood on a hill facing the sea, and not far away from the mansion of the consignee.

The cabin in many respects was not unlike the name it bore. Everything within was in shipshape

order. The tumblers and glasses swung from a tray suspended from the low roof above the dining-room table, while the table itself had four stout legs fastened to the floor.

In one of the corners of the room there was a locked cupboard, with a glass front, containing his liquors in variegated bottles, with labels of rum, brandy, gin, and whisky, designating their contents, and various other good things. In the other corner stood a similar locker, which was open, for his plate and the best of his crockeryware; and around the walls of the room were prints of ships in different positions—under sail, at anchor, or in a storm, with an ugly cliff under their lee. A stuffed monkey, a case of stuffed birds, a few ornamental demijons, a couple of carved cocoanut cups, two very easy chairs, and three of the ordinary stiff-legged sort, with a few other odds and ends, completed the furniture of his dining-room.

The other sitting-room—be it drawing-room or parlour—we did not see, for it was under the special charge of his old housekeeper, who seemed to have quite as much her own way in all household affairs as if she had been his wife. But whatever this sanctorum may have been which was under her especial control, the captain's bedroom, into which be it said, with all her authority, she was never



allowed to enter, was a ship all over. From the ceiling a hammock was suspended wherein he slept; an easy chair and a small table stood in the centre, whereon was a leaden box full of shag tobacco, and pipes of various sorts; a spittoon and washhand-stand in one corner, and a sea-chest in the other completed its furniture, except, I may add, that there hung above what appeared to be a mantel-piece, though there was no fireplace in the room, a fowling-piece, two pistols, and an old sword.

The house itself was only one story high. It was built partly of stone, but chiefly of wood. Surrounded by a verandah, around the pillars of which grew various creeping shrubs and flowers, and with a little garden in front laid out in the English style, the whole presented many more charms to Captain Roughhead than the mansion we had just left.

Nor was I less charmed with it. It was just one of those places that we read so much about in novels, but seldom see; and its owner was one of those rare and warm kind-hearted men who make you as much at home at first sight as if you had known them for two-thirds of your life.

Tea was laid, with various solid accompaniments, to which our skipper and I did ample justice. Afterwards we adjourned to under the verandah, where the many-coloured glass bottles, and a couple of long

clay pipes, with the leaden tobacco-box, had been neatly arranged ; and here the two old salts spun their yarns that pleasant evening.

THE TWO CAPTAINS HAVE THEIR GROG AND SPIN  
THEIR YARNS.

"And so you're frae Shields," repeated our skipper, addressing our host, as he surveyed the beautiful Tagus, which lay full before and below us, with the hill above St. Ubes in the distance, but looking askance at the liquor bottles and pipes as if quite ready to commence operations upon them. "Lor, bless your heart," continued our skipper, who, though he had lost his Shields dialect, spoke as broad Scotch as if he had been born as well as bred in Wigtonshire, "wha wu'd hae thocht that I should hae foond an auld townsmen o' mine aine, sae far awa' frae hame, and sae comfortably settled—and a schule-fallow, too. Gie me anither shake o' your haun'. I canna' get ow'r the thocht." Indeed, our skipper's feelings of joy were getting, he said, so much the better of him, that he felt obliged after a little, but only very little pressing, to help himself to "a wee drap o' rum, wae plenty o' water," as a means of relief.

"You would know old Captain Fordyce," remarked our host, after he had lighted his pipe and

filled his own tumbler with rum-and-water ; " he lived up in Dockeray Square, and owned a good many colliers."

" Ken him ? " replied our skipper, " I should think sae, for it was in ane o' his brigs I served my apprenticeship. He began the temperance principle in his ships when I was wae him ; and he didna' begin it a bit ow'r soon, for he was himsel' a drunken chiel in his day."

" I think," said Captain Dryden, " that it was one of his captains who was found dead, or supposed to be dead, one morning in the cabin, on a voyage to the Baltic, that frightened him into the adoption of the temperance principle in his ships. It was said that when this captain was found, and supposed to be dead, he was sitting in an arm-chair with a short pipe in his mouth, and a couple of empty gin bottles by his side. The sailors said that he was dead without doubt, for there he sat for hours after he had been found without moving or breathing. But it was touch and go with him in more ways than one. The mate, who, I think, must have had a spite against him—held that he was clean dead ; as dead as a door nail ; and proposed to the crew to have him sewed up in a hammock, and decently buried. And sewed up he was, and over-board he would have gone with the broken fluke of

an old kedge anchor at his feet had the knocking about not brought him to life again. It really was touch and go with him in more ways than one, for the gin had all but finished him, and had he only kept quiet a little longer, the mate would have made an end of him outright. No wonder that old Fordyce took to temperance, and prohibited strong drinks in his ships after that, for he might have been some day sewed up himself in one of his hammocks."

"O'!" said our skipper, "th' story's quite true, but ye ha'e nae got a' th' particulars about th' close o' it. It's quite true though. I was aine o' th' sailors o' th' brig at the time, and if th' gin, or the 'trance' after it, as I heard some one ca' it, did na dae for him, the buriel wud, for he was just on the point o' being slipped aff th' plank frae the ship's side, when he gave a groan and a grunt, that made the sailors drap him like a hot potatoe, luckily on the deck instead of ow'r the ship's side, and rin for their lives in clean stark fear to th' farthest end o' the brig! 'Oh! oh!—hillo!' roared th' dead skipper, for he was an awfu' Tartar when leeing, as his body fell thump on the deck; and the 'Oh! oh!' had such an awfu' unearthly sound that it was sometime ere ony aine wu'd gang to release him from his canvas coffin."

"The mate," continued our skipper, "had rin awa' and hid himsel' in his berth; the cook was delirious wi' fear. A' the sailors rin tae different parts o' th' ship, as far awa' frae' the gangway as they could get, ready to rin up the rigging, or jump overboard should needs be. Naething, as ye ken, Captain Dryden, frichtens a sailor mair than a ghost, or a deed man, should he come to life again; and this was jist ane o' the few cases o' a deed man coming to life, which they had heard sae muckle aboot, but had ne'er seen before, that made their fears ken nae boun's."

I drew close to our skipper as the tale was told, as much frightened as if I had seen the dead-and-alive man writhing in the hammock, while Captain Dryden re-filled his pipe, and helped himself to another glass of grog, as if he too had become somewhat nervous by listening to the details.

"But had somebody," continued Captain Rough-head, "not lent a haun', the skipper micht ha'e chocked himsel' or thrawn his neck whar' he was; he wriggled aboot and raved at sic' a rate. So I jist opened my jack-knife, and gawing cautiously towards him, ripped up the tracings o' the hammock in a trice, when out flew the captain in a jiffey, throwing his arms aboot him, and swearing like ony Turk. He was sober enough then, but he could

nae get up, as the fluke o' the auld kedge-anchor was fastened tae his feet. I soon cut this adrift, though he gie'd me nae thanks for my trouble, swearing at me and at everybody else. But the fricht made him a sober man for life ; at least, I ne'er saw him the warse o' liquor on that voyage, or on any ither o' the three voyages I sailed wi' him afterwards."

#### THE TWO SKIPPERS MORALISE.

"That just confirms what I have always thought," replied Captain Dryden. "An example of the danger of too much drink, such as that, is worth a thousand lectures on temperance ; and no wonder Captain Fordyce ever afterwards became a sober man, and forbade the use of strong drinks in his ships. Only prove to a man that too much drink may not merely be his ruin, but his death, or that it prevents him getting on in the world, or renders him liably to make a fool of himself, and he will keep within proper limits." What those limits were I cannot say ; for our host, after these very sensible remarks, re-filled his pipe, and helped himself to a third tumbler of rum-and-water.

"Jist so," said Captain Roughhead, following the example of our host. "I like temperance, but abstinence is clean contrary tae Scriptur'. 'Tak' a

little for thy stomach's sake.' I tak' my glass o' grog for my stomach's sake, but I draw a leemit."

It was quite true that Captain Roughhead did draw a limit; and when he had any important duties to perform, he always had his senses clear; but, unfortunately, the limit was not defined, and while, on some occasions, it was strictly fixed at one, or perhaps two caulkers, it sometimes extended to more; and, in this case, before the two friends parted, it reached six each, exclusive of what they had had at the mansion of the consignee. But the occasion was an unusually happy one in the page of our skipper's history, and the day had been one of great enjoyment, the mishap, when his modesty and nervous system had received such a shock, alone accepted. Perhaps that misfortune, combined with the joy of meeting so old a friend, had something to do with the extra tumblers he imbibed, for he referred, more than once in the course of the evening, to what "the leddies must hae thoct" when they saw him sitting on the marble floor, and not inclined to change his position.

Be that, however, as it may, the extra tumblers had no perceptible effect on Captain Roughhead; nor had they much more effect on our more polished host, beyond opening his mind, more freely than

otherwise, on the customs and doings of the Lisbon people, Portuguese and British.

CAPTAIN DRYDEN'S GRIEVANCES.—DISCUSSION AS TO  
OUR DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICES.

"Here I have been," he said, "for more than ten years, making the entries and clearances of all the British ships that pass Belem, and doing no end of things for our ships of war, the Minister, and Consul, and all I get for my work, experience, and advice, is £50 per annum, and the right to hoist in my garden the British flag at my own expense," pointing to the flagstaff as he spoke, which stood in the centre of the garden, "while our Consul, who does nothing, and knows nothing, gets £600 a-year; and our Minister, who knows less, draws his £4,000 per annum from the British Exchequer, besides having a free house; and in the case of the Consul, a good many perquisites. I would not complain, were it not the case, that the Vice-Consul, who has only £150 per annum, and I, do all the work."

"The Consul, it is true," continued Captain Dryden—for he had his grievance, like Mr. Farquhar, but, in his case, a real one, as in that of many other most useful subordinates—"signs and sends to the Foreign Office a lot of returns, but the Vice-Consul makes them up, and he and I collect all the



materials. As to our Minister, all he does is to write despatches, which he seldom knows much about, for we collect the information for his secretary and staff of clerks, and they draft the letters, and lay them before the Minister. It may ill-become me to say so, but Mr. Farquhar was quite right in all he said to you, though I am not quite sure that there ever was any prize money due to the regiment to which he belonged; but if there had been, it would have been all the same, for neither our Minister nor Consul would have troubled themselves in rendering him any assistance to get it; and what he said about the British merchant who sold to the Portuguese Government a cargo of coals, for which he never got payment, was quite correct. I know many cases here, where our countrymen have been unable to recover payment of their just claims against Portugal, through sheer indolence on the part of our officials, or for fear of offending the Portuguese authorities. I do not mean that it is their business to take up disputed claims, or when clear, to enforce them; for when we sell to persons where we know the payment is doubtful we do so with our eyes open, and must take our chance; but when the claim is clearly an honest one, our Minister and Consul might render much more assistance than they do towards its recovery. In

this respect, the representatives of the United States, and of various other foreign countries, are much more efficient than our own."

"Why, dinna our Government," enquired Captain Roughhead, "train up and promote the sort o' men best fitted for their wark as we do in our ships, and as is din in a' ither trades or professions? What's the use o' ha'ing baith a Minister and Consul here when one man o' experience if properly edicated could easily do a' the wark, and do it better than the twa wu'd appear, by a' accounts, to do it now?"

"Oh, that would never do," replied Captain Dryden, who, like many other persons, was opposed to what is known as "radical changes;" "that would never do, for our Minister must be a gentleman of high family; he, you know, represents the King, and must be fit to appear before royalty, and rank with the ministers of the country to which he is accredited."

"As to the high family," retorted our skipper, "I'm no verra sure about the force o' that argument, for ye ken knowledge is power; and the son o' a ploughman, had he only the edication and the training—the manners he would soon learn—and the practical experience, wu'd be far mair likely to carry his point whar onything o' importance was at

stake concerning the interests o' our country than ony lord, however high his breeding wha ken't naething about the subject, except what the likes o' ye and the Vice-Consul tel't him, and e'en then he wu'd likely mak' a mess o' it when he cam' tae contest the point wae clever and experienced foreigners."

"But the duties of a Minister and Consul are different," replied Captain Dryden, who, whatever he may have said about their ignorance, stood up stoutly for the existing system, although he failed to produce any sound arguments in favour of it.

"Whar's th' difference?" inquired our skipper. "Their duty is to protect the interests o' the nation they represent, and uphold its honour if need be. Besides that, they may ha'e 'to send hame ony information about the country likely to be usefu', and to do what they can, while protecting the interests o' British subjects, tae get the laws o' th' country whar' they are 'credited made as fair and as like our aine as possible. But little oor Ministers dae in that way; if I'm no' mistaken, the'r heeds are mair ta'en up wae the idle gossip that they hear about Court and in the ball-rooms, or at dinner parties, which they wu'd better keep tae themsel'es, for it hae mair than ance got us into troubles we wud ne'er hae got

into had they ne'er heerd it, and no' been fuils enough to repeat it. As to the duties o' oor Consuls tak'ng notes o' the names o' oor ships, and sending hame shipwrecked or distressed sailors, maist o' whom hae been drunk, and ran awa' frae their ships, and wha' wud better be left whar they wor'—ony clerk could do that; ye and the Vice-Consul do a' that wark yoursel'es here at Lisbon."

It was evident that our skipper had the best of the argument so far, for the only answer Captain Dryden could give was a repetition of what he had already stated, adding something more about having "gentlemen" in these positions.

"Weel, weel, I dinna say you shou'd mak' a man a Minister who is no' a gentleman in every sense o' that word, but a man disna need to be ane o' the members o' oor austocracy to mak' a gentleman. A' the lords in creation put t'gither wud na mak' a gentleman if it was na in him by natur'. Ye'l sometimes find real gentlemen at the plough tail, or in the fo'castle o' a ship; they are gentlemen at heart and in a' their actions; edicate sich men, train them to polished manners, and gee them the means o' gaining a thorough knowledge o' the duties for which they are wanted, and o' the folk amang whom they are to mingle, and yee'l mak' them the best Ministers England e'er saw."

"But how is that to be done?" inquired Captain Dryden.

"Duin! Dinna tak' ony youths into the public service unless they are o' honest moral parents, and hae a guid soun' edication and guid natural talents, and sic' like, which can be easily tested if we wu'd only dae awa' wi' patronage and leave them to be examined by competent, disinterested men. After they are thorough maisters o' how to read and write and count in their aine language—very essential learning, for many 'learned men' can dae neither tae perfection—they should ken the foreign languages, and how to say what they hae to say in a clear manner, without ony round-about either by word o' mouth or in writing. When they are fit for't, and after they hae had, if necessary, some training at our Foreign Office—there are some clever chieles there—send them abroad to be Vice-Consuls; and if they are clever fallows, mak' them Consuls when they hae experience enough; and if they are very clever, mak' them in time what ye ca' Charge d'Affaires, and then Ministers, or Plenpoteniers, and Ambassadors, according to their abilities or experience. If a' that was din, I'll warrant ye oor business abroad wu'd be din properly in a' its branches, and we wu'd nae langer hae ony o' they lounging, lazy, flirting, gossiping, horse-racing, and

bull-fechting chieels, o' whom we hae rather too many now representing our interests in foreign pairts. The qualifeecation for a public office ocht ne'er to be family connections, or sic like loose trainin' as I hae jist mentioned."

"But surely, Captain Roughhead," replied our host, "you do not consider our Ministers as a whole, or anything like it, to have any resemblance to the class of persons you describe? They are nearly all highly-educated gentlemen, and members of the highest families in England."

"That may be," pertinaciously replied our skipper; "but their edication is no' o' the richt sort, and they ha'e nae knowledge or experience o' commerce, or o' the places whar' they gang tae, and without these they are no' fit to be what you ca' diplomists, which, I suppose, means managing matters o' policy and the richts o' nations, their aine especially, to the best advantage and in a peaceful manner. I am far frae' sayin' they are a', or anything like it, what I ha'e described, but ow'r mony o' them are, as ye yersel' hae jist admitted; and a man o' your gumtion canna' but see that they wu'd be far better than they are now if trained in the way I think they should be. We wu'd na' mak' sai' mony blunders as we do, nor get into sai' mony scrapes, some o' which we dinna' get

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out o' without war, and a' its horrors. Then, jist consider what a saving o' expense there wu'd be," continued our skipper, "by a combination o' the wark o' the Minister and the Consul, and how much better it wu'd be din in a'e establishment than in twa, and under aine competent head instead o' twa doubtfu' ones. As to grandeur and importance, a big building, whar a' wu'd be located, wu'd strike the foreigners as mair imposing than the twa or three shachling-looking places ye hae got here, far awa' frae each ither, mak'ing a clean fuil o' the British flag and the King o' the grand nation they represent."

It was not easy in those days (and under circumstances now, happily passed away for ever) for a man with the experience which Captain Dryden had had at Lisbon to oppose any really valid argument to the changes proposed by our skipper, so he changed the subject and proposed another glass of rum-and-water, which our skipper said must be the closing one. Having refilled their glasses and replenished their pipes, the two skippers found no end of subjects to talk about, relating numerous anecdotes about old and mutual friends who lived on the banks of the Tyne and the Wear, and various reminiscences of bygone years, to which I have not space to refer, parting from each other

with many expressions of regret, and parting SOBER men.

"Sober men!" I think I hear some of my readers exclaim. "Sober men, after the number of cankers you tell us they had before parting."

Yes, "SOBER," I repeat; at least I can say of my own knowledge that our skipper walked without any assistance, and in as straight a line as any member of a temperance society could do, though the road was crooked and hilly enough from Captain Dryden's cabin to our jolly-boat, where Joe lay waiting for us at Belem Quay.

Now, such cannot be said of many of the "gentlemen" of that period, whose dinner parties and midnight bouts have been so graphically described in the pages of "Blackwood"—written in many cases, no doubt from their author's own experience. There and elsewhere we learn that half-a-century ago too many of those gentlemen could not, after such a jovial meeting as these two skippers had, walk as straight to their homes as he did to the jolly-boat; and I am sure that Captain Dryden did not that night make the floor beneath the dinner-table his bed, as the gentlemen of those days are described to have very frequently done, with its four legs for bedposts, and their shoulders, or other parts of their comrade's person, for pillows.



However inconsistent Captain Roughhead's professions may have been with his practice of indulging occasionally at merry meetings in more caulkers than I can recommend any of my friends to take, he had made an advance of the gentlemen of the age in which he lived, for he fixed a *limit* to his indulgence, and thus set them an example not unworthy of their adoption.

It may have been the case that our skipper could stand more intoxicating liquor than most men, and that is likely enough ; but that does not alter the wisdom or necessity of a man regulating his strong drinks to what he can stand. It is the abuse, not the use, against which sensible individuals, and sometimes whole communities, justly complain ; and although the punishment which a man who inordinately indulges inflicts upon himself is usually pretty severe, I should, rather than attempt to enforce Maine Liquor Laws, increase the punishment now inflicted by law upon all persons who in their cups injure others. A greater stringency in the law in this respect would be more effectual in diminishing drunkenness and its concomitant evils than any such laws which only restrain the freedom and the rational enjoyment of the many in a futile endeavour to improve and elevate the few.

## CHAPTER X.

### RETURN ON BOARD THE "ARETHUSA."

**I**T was past midnight ere we reached the *Arethusa*. Conchie was waiting at the gangway for his superior, who, by way of excuse for keeping his only mate so long out of bed, remarked that he had "fallen in wi' an auld freen', and gane wi' him to his house at Belem." Conchie, with all due humility, bowed his approval, only remarking to me in a whisper, as our skipper descended the companion hatch, that it was "very funny," as these very late hours were unusual with our skipper. Indeed, Conchie was not a man of many words under any circumstances, and as he was very dull of comprehension, he had always the one reply ready to whatever he could not clearly comprehend. No doubt the meeting of an old friend resident in a place, even so far away from home as Lisbon, might not have been an incomprehensible matter to other people, but it was so to Conchie.

Having completed the discharge of our outward cargo in a satisfactory manner, we commenced to

load wine, fruit and other Portuguese produce, the larger portion of which consisted of cork wood, for Glasgow.

#### VISIT TO CINTRA.

The weather continued very hot, and as the work during week days had been severe and constant, our skipper suggested that, by way of a little recreation, we should, on the following Sunday, act upon a suggestion made by Captain Dryden to visit Cintra, he having arranged to accompany us to that favourite resort.

I had read of Cintra and its many beauties, and was greatly delighted with the prospect before me.

The coach engaged to convey us thither was a thorough rattle-trap, and the two animals attached to it, which might be taken for either horses or mules, harnessed with rope traces, and ornamented with bells about their necks, were no better; but the coachman, who had no mercy on the brutes, got over the ground with remarkable speed, though to the cost of our bones.

There was nothing picturesque on the way. Trees were few and far between; the roads were execrable, and the fences, consisting chiefly of *Piteiras*, or cactus plants, had neither a pleasing nor tidy appearance. Many of the houses, though nearly all inhabited, were going to decay, and very few of the Quintas,

or country seats, were in any better condition. Nor were the people whom we saw in the villages any more attractive than their abodes, while the beggars were even more numerous than are to be found in any part of Ireland, displaying their diseases and infirmities in a revolting manner. The country was barren and badly cultivated; wooden ploughs and antiquated harrows were the only agricultural implements we saw from the road, and the carts, waggons, and other vehicles, nearly all of which were drawn by either oxen or mules, were of the most primitive description, presenting a sad contrast to what might have been expected in a country so renowned in history. But its glory had gone. May it not yet be restored by wise legislation and honest officials to what it once was? I think it may. Portugal by nature presents numerous advantages both by sea and land over many other countries, and its people, especially the peasantry, are industrious and frugal. I was equally disappointed with Cintra itself. It was then a town, (whatever it may be now) half in ruins, with narrow, dirty streets running up the hill side, and squalid-looking people. There were a palace and prison, but they alike stood much in need of repair, and from the grated windows of the latter the prisoners suspended bags or old shoes

to receive the charity of the passers by. The approach from Lisbon was lined, it is true, with some tall trees which were refreshing after the parched-up country we had passed through, but they were insignificant compared to those of England. Land and houses had a decaying appearance, and, although the prospect from the Pena, a high hill over the town, on which there then stood an old Moorish castle, was extensive, and I may say grand, though rugged, it in no way equalled the view from Richmond Hill, with which I have sometimes heard it compared. I suspect when Byron wrote his beautiful lines about Cintra he had been enjoying himself with some of the exquisite wines of his exquisite host, Beckford, who had taken up his abode at Monte Serratte, which Byron has made famous. This place, now restored and beautifully decorated by a wealthy London warehouseman, and the Pena, since converted into a country residence by Don Fernando, the late Regent of Portugal, have long been the only places really worthy of inspection in Cintra; but, while the Pena is always open to the public, tourists are excluded, as a rule, from Monte Serratte.

Captain Roughhead was equally disappointed with the place; but I had the advantage over him of enjoying a donkey ride to the Pena, which he

certainly did not enjoy; indeed, more than once our skipper was thrown with a thump to the ground on our excursion thither, and had the Belem tailor not double-lined that part of his inexpressibles on which he fell, there would have been another awkward exposure of his person.

"Hot wark, hot wark, this will ne'er do, Captain Dryden," said our skipper, as he tumbled from his donkey for the third time on our descent from the Pena; "I canna stand it ony langer without some refreshment;" and certainly, the hotel to which we adjourned for that purpose, was, to our fancy, the most enjoyable place in Cintra. It stood on the brink of a hill overlooking the palace, and the principal part of the town, with Monte Serratte and its pretty surroundings in the distance. Over the terrace walk in front, and by the side entrance, vine trees grew in great luxuriance, forming a charming cover from the scorching rays of the sun.

#### WE MEET WITH ANOTHER SKIPPER.

The house itself, though small, was very clean, and evidently well managed. In the dining-room, which opened upon the terrace, there were a number of guests, and amongst them the master of an American brigantine, then at anchor in the

Tagus, to whom Captain Dryden introduced our skipper. He was apparently a superior person of his class, and I soon found that he possessed an amount of intelligence, including a knowledge not merely of business, but of passing political events, much in advance of masters of British vessels of similar dimensions to his own. But such was the case with the masters of all foreign ships, especially those of the United States at the period to which I refer.

Captain Dryden, during a discussion which took place after dinner, had no hesitation in admitting this fact, confirmed by his ten years' residence in Lisbon ; and also that in model and equipment, American vessels were undoubtedly far in advance of our own—facts which even Captain Roughhead felt bound to admit, although he could not see that protection had anything whatever to do with the disparity.

"I guess it is the sole cause of it," quietly remarked the master of the American schooner. "We should have no chance of gaining a living with our ships did we not strive to excel you in every way, so as to make up for the advantages you obtain by your navigation laws ; while you, on the other hand, knowing that there are numerous trades where you are free from competition, and can always realise a profit, do not care to alter the old

forms of your vessels or the mode of working them, as we are obliged to do."

"That is the fact," remarked Captain Dryden; I see it exemplified almost every day of my life; and the more I see of foreign ships the more am I inclined to think that until we are relieved from all protection and made to depend on ourselves, we never shall be able to compete with them successfully in any trade where there is a fair field and no favour. I shall take you to-morrow," he continued, addressing our skipper, "to my friend's brigantine; she lays at anchor not far from the *Arethusa*, and there you can see and judge for yourself of the difference between the vessels of the two nations. As to the cause, we must leave those persons to discuss that point who have the power to make a change, but I want you to be thoroughly convinced of a great fact which you now admit with doubts and reluctance."

#### VISIT TO THE AMERICAN BRIGANTINE.

With that object in view we accepted the American's polite invitation to have breakfast with him on the following morning. His vessel, a fine specimen of what was then known by the name of "Baltimore clippers," though he himself was from Bath, in the State of Maine, lay not more than 100 fathoms



from where we were moored, so that Joe and our jolly-boat soon put us alongside.

I think the first glance at the vessel as he stepped on board, convinced our skipper that we had no chance of competing successfully with her on the conditions which Captain Dryden, who had arrived before us, had named in the course of the previous afternoon's conversation. Although about the same register tonnage, she was fully one-third, if not one-half, longer than the *Arethusa*, with very fine ends, and low straight sides. Her deck was flush fore-and-aft, with a house amidships for the seamen and the galley. Her yards were very square; her sails, made of cotton cloth, were light, and though they would not wear so long as sails made of flax, they were more easily handled. All her blocks were much larger than those of the *Arethusa*, and as the sheaves were equally so, and were of the best description, mounted on brass bushes, the ropes of Manilla hemp, ran freely through them. Small winches were attached to the masts, by means of which the topsail-yards and other heavy weights were hoisted, thus lessening the necessity for manual labour. The fore-and-aft mainsail was raised by similar means, and there were leading blocks by the side of the standing rigging through which the tacks, sheets, clew-lines, and traces could be led, and the

winches applied when necessary. The windlass and nearly all other appliances were of a superior description to any Captain Roughhead had previously seen, so that she did not require more of a crew than five all told, or one less than the *Arethusa*, though she could stow one-third more cargo, and sailed nearly twice as fast.

"We don't keep any more cats here than can catch mice," remarked the captain, addressing our skipper, who had expressed surprise at the smallness of the crew, and doubts as to the very great speed of the brigantine. "There wouldn't be much chance for us if we did against you Britishers, who have all the best trades in your own hands; but I guess if you had to scrimmage for employment as we have to do, and take what's going—in a word, if you were obliged, as Captain Dryden says, to run us a regular clean race, you would soon turn out vessels to match ours; and why shouldn't you? You have all the materials," continued the American, "and all the means, and as you're of the same flesh and blood, you have the same energy, but you're not obliged to apply it as we are, *and that's the reason why you don't*. You take matters easy, as we should do under similar circumstances; had you to compete with others, grass would not grow, as it now does, on the bottoms of your ships; and your

builders, who are quite as clever as ours, would turn out craft that would sail as fast as any Baltimore clipper."

But Captain Roughhead, though a man of great shrewdness, was slow in being convinced that their chief mode of living, embracing the "fat pork, and treacle," and the "Indian corn meal," once so famous in all arguments in favour of our inability to compete with the Americans, had not more to do with their success than the necessity to work for themselves which our Navigation Laws had imposed upon them. Nor did the excellent breakfast with which the American supplied us, and the bill of fare of his crew, tend to weaken his opinions. He had been taught to believe that the "sour crout and black bread" of the Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes, had been the secret of their success, and he thought that similar means had enabled the American shipowners to realize profits out of their ships. "A man convinced against his will, remains of that opinion still." Arguments do not convince him; against these he sets up long-established opinions, or, rather prejudices, and to these the shipowners of Great Britain rigidly adhered until the repeal of the Navigation Laws left them to depend in all trades entirely upon their own exertions and resources. Then, and then only, were their natural genius

and energy brought into full play ; these, combined with the vast undeveloped resources of their country, enabled them to compete, not merely successfully with the vessels of all nations, but to take the lead, and soon afterwards secured for them a position which their forefathers had never attained. We now possess nearly as large an amount of tonnage as all other nations combined, and with it the real maritime supremacy of the ocean.

We have still our troubles, it is true ; and the Plimsoll agitation has been, of late years, no common cause of annoyance to our shipowners ; while Government exercises, in many respects, an unnecessary control over their affairs ; but this will, in time, rectify itself. Experience will prove the fallacy of subjecting good and bad men alike to the control of inefficient Board of Trade officials, instead of allowing the former to carry on their business in such a manner as they deem best, and requiring the latter to furnish proof that the ships they send to sea are not unseaworthy.

#### SET SAIL FROM LISBON.

The *Arethusa* having completed her cargo for Glasgow, about the same time as the American brigantine had taken on board her loading for New York, both vessels sailed within a few minutes of

each other ; but in six hours from the time of our final departure from the clearance house at Belem, the American was nearly out of sight a-head of us—a feat which banished all doubts from our skipper's mind as to her very superior speed.

The weather continued fine for some days, and the winds, though light, were favourable ; but the day after we passed the Berlins, from which we took our final departure, it veered round to the north-west, and the feathery flakes of clouds, which spread themselves over the otherwise deep-blue sky, betokened a coming gale.

“Conchie,” remarked the skipper to his only mate, “I dinna like the mare's tails flickering about the sky ; they put me in min' o' the awfu' storm that wrecked the brig *Betsey*, belonging to Shiel's, on the Longscar Rocks, near Hartlepool, when every soul on board was droon'd except the skipper, twa men, and mysel'. I was then an apprentice boy, and had it no' been for twa fishermen in their cobble, wha picked us up whun we were at our last gasp, floating on a bit o' the wreck, we wud a' ha'e gane.”

“It begins to blaw,” continued Captain Rough-head, “jist as it did then ; no very strong at first, but coming in whiffs and whirls, as if the gathering gale wanted to try its pow'r before setting out on its

cruise o' destruction, tearing up, blowing oure, or sinking so mony o' the things that come in its way and stop its progress. I often wonder whar' the winds cum' frae and whar' they gaw," continued our skipper in a soliloquising manner. But this was much beyond Conchie's comprehension, who, instead of making any remark, went forward to carry out the order our skipper had given, to take in the top-gallantsail and gaff-topsail. Happily, however, it was not necessary to further shorten sail, as the wind veering round to the east did not then increase in strength as the skies betokened, and being more favourable, enabled the *Arethusa* to make rapid progress homewards across the Bay of Biscay.

From the time of the Phœnician and Carthagénian navigators down to our own day, sailors have had a fear of crossing the Bay of Biscay, and rejoice when they pass Ushant to the north, or clear away Cape Finisterre to the south. It has ever been a dreaded bay for it has been the scene of many a shipwreck. During westerly gales I have always noticed that the waves roll into the mouth of that well-known bay in greater volume and with more anger than in any other part of the Atlantic Ocean. Considering the still threatening appearance of the sky, we were glad when we had crossed the bay in safety.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### AN APPROACHING GALE.

**E**ASTERLY winds are generally accompanied by a clear blue sky, but in this case the flakes which had threatened the coming gale gathered in deep white claying clouds as if they had been plastered to the sky. When we passed Ushant the wind backed round to the north-east and increased in strength, and when we reached the Land's End, which we also sighted, the wind had increased to a gale from the north. Captain Roughhead, now seeing that we could not make a passage up St. George's Channel as he had intended, shaped his course for Cape Clear, but failed to sight it, as the weather had now become thick. He then resolved to take the north passage, making a good stretch to the westward of Ireland, so as to give that ugly part of the coast about Bantry Bay a wide berth.

It was well that he did so, for the wind now backed to the westward, but too late for us to retrace our course and make for St. George's

Channel, as originally contemplated. We had, however, obtained a good offing, and had reached far enough north to have the Shannon and that still more excellent harbour, Galway, under our lee in case of accident.

Our skipper, however, had no thought of running for a harbour of refuge under any circumstances short of the loss of his masts; and as the gale, though it continued to increase, had now veered to the southward of west, it was again favourable, and consequently he pursued his course, carrying on every stitch of canvas the *Arethusa* could bear in safety. But at last the gusts became so strong that he considered it prudent to stow the jib, reef the fore-and-aft mainsail and foresail, and double reef the topsail; and under this reduced sail we continued for some time.

#### THE GALE INCREASES.

The gale, which had been veering about, and had been so long brewing, now commenced to blow from the south-west in thorough earnest, and as there was every appearance of it increasing, Captain Rough-head sent the watch below to get as much rest as they could, and took charge of the helm himself, resolving to remain on deck for the night, and be ready to call all hands when necessary. As the



autumnal equinox had passed without its usual accompaniments, he felt convinced, even if he had not been warned by the threatening aspect of the sky, that a gale was approaching of more than usual severity.

However fond of a glass of grog, our skipper adhered rigidly to his maxim of temperance when duty required him to do so, and consequently he had only one caulker during that long dreary night. The *Arethusa*, though far from a clipper, was an excellent sea boat, and from the nature of her cargo she was in good and even buoyant trim. Nevertheless, the green seas frequently washed over her bows in volumes, and now and again found their way into the cabin as well as the forecabin.

This was the first real gale of wind I had encountered at sea. I had been ordered below with the rest of the watch, but as the *Arethusa* rolled about so much that I was unable to sleep in my athwart-ship berth, I put on my monkey-jacket and oil-skin "south-wester" and returned to the deck.

I cannot say that I was without fear; on the contrary, every plunge of the *Arethusa* made me wish myself located in my father's manse, or even at school; but the grandeur of the gale and of the waves, as they rolled and dashed over the vessel, their crests sparkling in the gloom with

phosphorescent lights, rivetted me to the spot where I had sat down, close to the skipper at the helm.

Perhaps Nature presents no grander or more awful sight—a thunderstorm in the tropics not excepted—than a south-western gale on the Atlantic, when surveyed from the deck of a small vessel; at one moment you are tossed about like a feather on the crest of some stupendous wave, and in another lost in its gulf or hollow. If the moon, as on that occasion, is in its last quarter, the solemnity of the storm is materially increased. You are then enabled to obtain by means of its watery and weird-looking rays, a better sight, however imperfect, of the agitated ocean on which you are tossed, and of the dark clouds overhead, growing darker and more gloomy as they gather in a focus to be sent forth with a savage gust against the devoted vessel in which you are, as if she were the sole object of their anger.

That night every succeeding gust seemed to increase in fury, and when it had expended itself, the gathering haze over the comparatively clear space in the sky from which it had rushed, only betokened other gusts still more furious.

"They came like rushing hosts of war,  
Like loosened cataracts from afar,  
Like thunders of the sea."

"Tommy," said the skipper to me, as I sat on the covering board, crouched under the lee of the weather rail, "ye wad be mair comfortable in yier bed on sic' a nicht as this, but as yier there I want you to tak' a message for me."

I thought it was to go and rouse the steward for another glass of grog, but I was mistaken. Our skipper knew when to imbibe, and when to be temperate, and although two glasses could not have done him any harm, exposed as he was to the weather, I must do him the justice to state that the single caulker was the only one he had, so far as I knew, while the gale continued.

"Gang awa' below," he continued, "and tell Conchie ta come on deck, and tell him for me ta come up as soon as he can." But I found it no easy matter to rouse our only mate, for like one of Ocean's own sons, the harder it blew the sounder he slept.

"Ca' a' haun's," cried our skipper, as soon as Conchie made his appearance on deck, rubbing his eyes, and attempting to peer to windward through the increasing storm. "Ca' a' haun's, and be quick about it, tae close reef the foresail, and tak' in and stow the topsail, and when you gang forward, you and Chips pu' down the fore-staysail; we're gawing ta hae an awfu' teaser."

But before the rest of the crew reached the deck the topsail had split, and its fragments torn into numerous ribbons, were cracking like as many whips in the hands of demons over the heads of the sailors as they reached the deck of the forecastle. In another instant the foresail was blown almost clean away from its bolt ropes; and as the fore-staysail had by this time been hauled down, the *Arethusa* might have suddenly broached to when deprived of her head sails. Under these circumstances it would then have gone hard with us, had not our skipper, with the assistance of the two men in his watch, instantly lowered the fore-and-aft mainsail.

The *Arethusa* was now knocking about at a fearful rate in the trough of the sea, without a stitch of canvas upon her. She was in a very critical position, but, as our skipper had with great tact managed to keep spread a small portion of the mainsail she was kept head to wind, and in a position of comparative ease and safety, while the remainder of the crew were engaged securing to the yards, the shivered fragments of the foresail and foretopsail.

Daylight had dawned before the sailors managed to complete their arduous labour. I did my best to lend them a hand; but my mind was full of the

most gloomy forebodings ; and as I sat on the weather end of the foreyard with my knife assisting Conchie to cut away, as best I could, the seizings of the remnants of the foresail so that we might save as much of it as we could, I felt that it would be impossible for the *Arethusa* to weather such a storm.

She did, however, although the foreyard arms ever and anon almost touched the crests of the waves as we rolled to and fro. At one moment we seemed to be buried in their hollow, and in another we were tossed high in the air, as if formed of the corkwood which comprised so large a portion of her cargo ; but with our practised skipper at the helm, she rode over the highest waves in gallant style. And when we managed to set a storm trysail and hove her to, she rose and fell with almost as much ease as the sea-fowl with which we were surrounded, shipping hardly any water on deck. I could not have conceived it possible that good seamanship would have produced such a change in the movements of the vessel.

In this state we lay for some days and nights ; but as the gale showed no signs of abatement, the position of the *Arethusa* had become a matter of very serious consideration to Captain Roughhead. He had not been able to obtain any observation of the

sun since he had taken his departure from the Land's End; and the soundings which, like a prudent master, he frequently attempted to take, though sometimes to no purpose, could not then be depended upon.

It was true that the gale held sufficiently far to the southward of west to prevent us being driven upon the Irish Coast, but it blew with such force that we were evidently drifting much faster to the north than Captain Roughhead wished. Indeed our position had now become one of much uncertainty, and with the Hebrides or Western Islands of Scotland under our lee, it was also one of great danger.

This state of anxiety soon extended to the crew. Sailors, as a rule, seldom lose confidence in their skipper so long as he keeps sober, and is able to obtain an observation of either the sun or stars, but they knew that he had not obtained either, and that he was depending on his "dead reckoning," at all times precarious, and especially so in this case, where we had so long been hove too on a coast where the currents were irregular and frequently rapid; and they knew also that, with our short deep-sea lead-line, the soundings, such as we had, were not trustworthy.

The nights had now become as dark as pitch, and

the days were almost as gloomy. Of the sun we saw nothing—not a ray, except when it rose casting a fiery glare over the eastern horizon, or set with a still more forbidding aspect to the west.

In this state of uncertainty we continued for more than a week. Captain Roughhead knew, and so did everyone on board, that we must be drifting towards the Hebrides. It was a time of great anxiety. Every eye was now on the look out for land, and one of the crew was frequently sent aloft to see if any traces of it could be discovered. At last our suspense was relieved, but only to increase our anxiety, and render our perilous position more certain. The first light of the morning's sun revealed to the man on the look-out aloft a terrible sight. His shout of "Land under our lee" made every heart quake, and when he added that he thought he saw breakers between us and the land, everyone felt that we were so dangerously close to it that there was no hope for the *Arethusa*.

Although the land was obscured almost immediately afterwards by the dense black clouds which hung over the sun as it rose above the horizon, and had not been seen by anyone else, there was no reason to doubt that the glare from its rays had too clearly revealed to the man aloft its existence, and our too close proximity to a rugged and

dangerous coast. Captain Roughhead now felt certain that we had drifted amongst the numerous islands which line the western coast of Scotland, but at what part he could not then even conjecture.

Under ordinary circumstances there is no more welcome sight than the land after you have been long at sea. The eye wearies for a change from the constant view of sky, clouds and ocean, and we picture to ourselves an early relief from these ever the same, although ever changing objects, and from the every day routine of a ship where you may have been cooped up for many months. The sight of land, for which we have shaped our course, and desire to make, is then welcome, even if it be a barren rock.

I have frequently experienced the exquisite delight which its first sight affords when the land before us is the home of our fathers, and we see in the distance the richly-clad soil where, perhaps, we may have spent many pleasant days. It would be impossible to describe the ecstasy that such a sight affords. How very bright and sunny are then our hopes and anticipations! and if we have been long absent from friends we love, with what delight we picture to ourselves another social meeting.

But how different were the feelings of everyone on board of the *Arethusa* that gloomy morning.



In their case the sight of land betokened, under the circumstances, almost certain destruction, while the ignorance of our actual position increased, if that were possible, our despair. Captain Roughhead, however, maintained his calmness ; if he had still his doubts, and if he saw our imminent danger, which he must have done, he displayed no token of fear, but continued in the same quiet, watchful mood that he had been throughout. Indeed, the near approach to great danger, if not to death, seemed to have strengthened his iron nerves.

Directing Conchie to take his place at the helm, he drew from underneath the companion hatch his telescope, with which he walked forward, and slowly but carefully scanned the eastern horizon, where the rays of the morning sun had for a minute revealed the sight of land. Nothing, however, was now to be seen or heard, except the violently agitated ocean, and numbers of sea birds, screeching as they skimmed over the surface, following the curls of the waves as if they knew that on their crest they would most likely find the food of which they were in search.

But Captain Roughhead had not taken up his station by the foremast more than half-an-hour when he came aft again, took hold of the helm, and half whispered to Conchie to set sail, while he himself

stood ready to bring the *Arethusa's* head as close as she would lie to the wind. He had seen land both to the northward and eastward, the former almost dead under our lee; and, after a careful examination of the chart, he was convinced that we had drifted amongst the Hebrides, somewhere between Barra and the small islands to the southward of it.

Not a moment was now to be lost; and though Conchie looked with astonishment when he received orders to set more sail in such a tremendous gale, he obeyed them with alacrity, for by this time Conchie himself had caught a glimpse of the land. Happily, we had bent our new topsail and foresail after the others had been blown away, and had prepared the storm fore-and-aft mainsail ready for setting.

"Be quick, my guid fellows," cried our skipper to his men. "Mak' haste, my lads, mak' haste;" but the sailors did not require prompting any more than Conchie, for all of them had now seen our dangerous position. "Up wi' the fore-staysail, and down wi' the fore-tack. Clap on a' haun's at the fore-sheet, then loose the topsail"—(both sails had been close-reefed when they were bent)—"rouse hame the sheets, and hoist away topsail-yard. Now, then, out wi' the storm-trysail—brace up, and haul taut the weather-braces."

Although these orders were given with unusual rapidity, the work was carried out almost as fast as the words fell from our skipper. Conchie displayed extraordinary activity, and—when his long but muscular arms were brought into full play—he could get through with more work than any two ordinary men.

Immediately, however, the sails were set, and the skipper—who remained at the helm—had brought the *Arethusa* close up to the wind, she staggered like some drunken man, and careened over in so frightful a manner, that I felt she must capsize, or that the gale, in its fury, would tear the masts, with her sails, clean out of her; but, on the next instant, she bravely rose to the waves, as if defying the storm. Like some thing of life, she waged war with the elements, ever and anon yielding to their power, but as frequently rising again in defiance. It was a grand but terrible sight.

The gale was now blowing nearly due south, and, though plunging fearfully under the pressure of the sails, the *Arethusa* made more headway than could, under such circumstances, have been expected from her. Nevertheless, she was at the same time slowly, but surely, drifting towards the dreaded shore; and, as we approached, we could see the waves breaking with awful fury against the base of

the rugged cliffs, as if attempting to surmount them.

Thus we continued on our course for between two and three hours—they seemed like a day—the *Arethusa* plunging and staggering as if she would shake herself into fragments, but still maintaining her position so well to the windward, as to induce the hope that she would clear the land immediately under her lee. 'But our only chance of doing so rested with the masts, ropes, and sails holding in their places.

Our skipper saw this, and calling Conchie to him he said, "Ye mun double tack the foresail, and put stoppers on a' the sheets, and be ready for the warst. Then rouse up the chain cables and ha'e the anchors clear. It's life or death for us noo, Conchie, and there mun be nae flinching; we mun weather awa' that headland which you see there on the lee bow. If we can manage it wee'l fin' shelder o' some sort at the back o' South Uist or down about Skye."


Captain Roughhead had more than once been trading amongst these islands on his coasting voyages, and when he had obtained a clear sight of the land he knew perfectly well where he was. Nor were Conchie and most of the crew strangers to that rugged coast. Indeed, Conchie when a lad,

had been once cast on shore in a small coaster on the outer Hebrides, and though he no doubt considered it very funny that he was likely to be cast on shore there a second time, he kept his thoughts to himself and performed wonders at his duty. He was a perfect Hercules when an emergency required him to do his utmost.

Nor was Conchie less stout-hearted. Simple-minded and silly-looking fellow as he was, there were few braver men, and with all he was one of the gentlest and kindest of mortals. Always prepared for death, he was ready to face it in any form; nor did the thought that if his life was spared in shipwreck there would be other dangers still to encounter on shore disturb his usual equanimity. In all my experience I never met two better sailors, nor, though void of book-learning, two finer specimens of blunt, honest, cool, determined men than Captain Roughhead, of the *Arethusa*, and his "only mate."

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE WRECK OF THE "ARETHUSA."

UR skipper as well as Conchie knew that the "wreckers" belonging to the Hebrides, like too many of their calling at that time on the west coasts of Scotland and Ireland, were lawless fellows, and he had his fears of what might follow the stranding of the *Arethusa*. Ships or boats or other waifs of the ocean thrown on their shores, were considered lawful prizes by all these wreckers, and as most of them were men of a desperate as well as a daring character, they were not to be trusted when their "rights" were disputed. If the storm had left no living soul to claim the stranded ship, everything in and about her became not merely an easy prey, but in their opinion was a windfall which the sea, not having engulfed, left for their use; nor did they doubt their right to claim as their own whatever was washed on their sterile shores even in cases where the tempest had spared the lives of the crew. Sometimes life itself was sacrificed to secure their object—not that they would as a rule,

though there are exceptions on record, massacre the crew in cold blood for the sake of plunder, but, if likely to answer their purpose, they were not over-zealous in attempting to save any of the ship's company struggling for life amidst the wreck of their vessel.

Conchie knowing all this as well as our skipper, redoubled his exertions to keep the *Arethusa* beyond the grasp of the Hebrides wreckers.

The inhabitants of Barra—the larger portion of whom were Roman Catholics, not that they were more ignorant of the rights of property than the small Presbyterian portion of the community—had with eager eyes seen the *Arethusa* struggling with the storm quite as soon as we had seen the island. They had watched our movements from every lofty cliff with glowing thoughts, of another gift from the ocean which the gale in its anger was about to cast on shore, and having seen that the *Arethusa* must inevitably be stranded, they had now gathered in crowds on the headland, which they felt it would be impossible for her to weather.

At all times and in all places the prospect of a ship being stranded and becoming a wreck has the most thrilling effect on the witnesses on shore of such an exciting and too frequently terrible catastrophe. Men, women, and children—it does not

matter what is their age, rank, or tongue—hasten to the spot where the doomed vessel is likely to strike. The storm and the ill-fated craft, bravely but vainly contesting against the raging elements, are grand, however awful, objects for contemplation, and they are in themselves a thrilling contest between man's skill, his science, and his genius, and nature in one of its most terrific aspects. The winds and the waves combining to destroy one of the noblest triumphs of art might well in itself attract crowds of persons to witness the struggle, but with a class of persons who, should the elements prove victorious, consider wrecks as a special dispensation of a wise Providence, the interest is intense.

Towns and hamlets are deserted on such occasions, and even the husbandmen from the valleys, and the shepherds from the hill sides, leave their occupations and their flocks to be witnesses of the warfare. In more civilised portions of the United Kingdom than the Hebrides, we rush to the spot in the hope of saving life, and, with that object, frequently display the most heroic exertions; the preservation of life of others being one of our best and noblest feelings, so strong that it often overcomes the caution or prudence necessary for the protection of our own lives.

Far be it from me to say that an anxiety to save



life, combined with that love for sight-seeing, especially sights of an exciting character—inherent to our nature—did not actuate very many of those persons who had collected on the headland of Barra, where the *Arethusa* was likely to be stranded ; but there was evidently a goodly number who had gone there in hope of plunder, or—to state the case in its mildest form—to pick up whatever the storm cast upon their wild and rugged shores.

As we drew towards the land, while the cliffs were in some parts covered by groups of people, we saw in two of the sandy nooks which intervened, a number of men, and one or two large fishing-boats, ready to be launched, their crews waving flags, as if they wished us to run for the beach, under, I believe, the honest conviction that the *Arethusa* could not weather the headland.

But Captain Roughhead paid no attention to their signals. His thoughts were too much directed to the one object he had in view, the safety of the vessel, which he felt could only be accomplished by getting round that bluff promontory. The large gathering of people must, however, have created in his mind a fear of their hostile—rather than their friendly—intentions, for he whispered to Conchie :—

“Gang awa’, and load the blunderbuss, we may

need it; for should we strike and hau'd th'gither, some o' they chieles—they're warse than the warst o' Heelin'men—may fin' their way alangside; and though they micht nae' attempt to tak' our lives in broad daylight, they're no to be trusted when they see onything they wu'd like to ha'e. They're a pau'cky, sleekey, thieving lot—I ken them weel." And as Conchie knew them likewise, and was somewhat familiar with their failings, he promptly obeyed our skipper's orders.

The *Arethusa*, however, stood so well up to her canvas, that she bade fair to disappoint the wreckers; but it was an hour of the most fearful suspense of any we had experienced during the gale. The people on shore could now be distinctly seen; indeed, in the momentary lulls, we thought we heard their combined shouts, for they were a thousand times more excited than any one on board of the apparently doomed brigantine. Admiration for the manner in which she seemed to defy the elements had, no doubt, something to do with their shouts or cheers, for, with all their failings and thieving propensities, they, like all other seafaring people, revelled in such a struggle as was now going on, and which, in a few minutes, must be decided either one way or another. In less time than I take to tell the tale, the *Arethusa* would either

have rounded the dreaded headland, and been away in comparative safety, out of their sight, or she would, as every one on shore must have thought, been dashed to pieces on the cliff; nor could our crew entertain any other opinion.

Neither of these conjectures, however, proved correct; the *Arethusa* would have weathered away the headland had everything held fast; but the fore-sheet, though double lashed, gave way at the most critical moment, with a crack so loud that it was distinctly heard by everyone on board, even amidst the howling storm, and away with it went the foresail, rent into shivers.

It seemed to be all over with us, and so it would have been, for there was nothing now to prevent us from drifting on to the base of the cliff we had been endeavouring to weather, when every soul on board must have perished, had Captain Roughhead, with great nerve and presence of mind, not put the helm hard up, squared the fore-topsail, and run the *Arethusa* for the largest and apparently the clearest of the two sandy nooks or beaches, from which the people on shore had waved their signal flags.

It was a bold and successful stroke of seamanship, for although the *Arethusa* afterwards became a total wreck, all our lives were saved, and most of our clothing.

## WE LAND SAFELY ON BARRA ISLAND.

Happily we had taken the beach at high water, and had half-rounded to, as we struck under the partial shelter of a huge boulder rock, which broke the rollers as they spent themselves on the beach, and saved us from what otherwise might have been instant destruction.

But we soon discovered that, though our lives were safe, our ship must become a wreck. In running for the beach, the *Arethusa* had bumped over a shelf of sunken rocks, which had played fearful havoc with her bottom, driving holes in it so large that had she not in a few minutes afterwards been beached on the sandy shore she must at once have sunk, or been broken up on the reef over which the waves had luckily carried her.

It was some time ere the people on shore could reach us; but as the tide receded, a dozen rough-looking fellows managed, at half tide, to get alongside in their lugger.

Captain Roughhead did not seem to relish their looks, and having great doubts as to their intentions, he brought the blunderbuss from under cover and fresh primed it ready for action, if needs be; while Conchie immediately afterwards made his reappearance on deck with a couple of large horse-

pistols stuck into his waist-belt, and an old cutlass slung by his side, which though somewhat rusty, would have been effective enough in his powerful grasp.

"We dinna want ony help frae ye," said our skipper to the men in the boat when they had hauled her alongside; "I ken a' about this coast, and at low water we can a' get on shore wi' the things we want without your help. Nae wreckers will be allowed to come on board this vessel while I'm in command o' her." But four of them had in the meantime scrambled over the side.

What their intentions were it is not easy to conjecture, but as they apparently had no arms of any sort about them, I must, in charity, suppose that they really meant to render us any assistance we might require, or, at most, to help themselves to whatever could no longer be of any use to us.

If, however, they intended plunder—that is, open defiant plunder—the resolute looks of our skipper, with the blunderbuss by his side, and the appearance of Conchie, armed as he was, must at once have put any open marauding proclivities out of their heads, at least, for the time being.

"Weel, weel, Captain; we jist thocht," remarked their leader, "that after sic a nicht as ye mun hae hed, ye and the crew wud want rest, and that me

and my chiefs here might earn an honest penny or twa by lending a haun' to get as muckle o' the cargo out o' the ship at low water as we could, for she'll ne'er get aff the shore again."

They knew that the *Arethusa* had struck upon the sunken reef, and must become a total wreck, and that, even if repairable, there were no means of effecting the repairs on the island, or at any place in the immediate vicinity.

Captain Roughhead, seeing that they, for the present meant no harm, and as their proposal was fair and honest enough, he engaged them to lend a hand to put on shore what could be saved in the course of that tide, including our clothing, nautical instruments, and the most valuable portion of the outfit; these, with a considerable portion of the lighter and more valuable description of the cargo, we were enabled, with their assistance, to land safely on the beach that day before sunset.

Nevertheless, our skipper still entertained doubts of the honest intentions, not merely of the men who had found their way on board, but of a great many of the people who hung about the shore, for they were an idle, loafing-looking lot, and as the goods were landed, he placed Conchie with the cutlass and pistols by his side, and "chips," the carpenter, with the blunderbuss under his arm, to watch over them.

At that time there was no receiver of wrecks stationed in the Hebrides, at least not on the island of Barra, and the parish priest was supposed to perform that difficult and responsible duty. Under the conviction that a person in his position would perform his duty faithfully, Captain Roughhead, after he had dispatched to the nearest village whatever articles might have been conveniently carried away, left everything else for the night in charge of the priest and one of our crew, proceeding with Conchie and myself and the remainder of our men to the village, for the rest and refreshment we so much required.

But the priest, and those of his people whom he had appointed to assist the man we had left to look after the remainder of the goods which had been landed, managed to induce him to drink more of their peat still whisky than he ought to have done, and wearied out by the work of the previous day, and overcome by the enticing potation, he fell into so sound a sleep, that when he awakened at daylight he found that all the goods had disappeared, except two or three bales of corkwood, on which he had lain down to rest.

#### CAPTAIN ROUGHHEAD LOSES HIS TEMPER.

Captain Roughhead was in a towering passion,

as well he might be, not so much with Joe who had been left in charge as with the priest, when he learned that the goods had been taken away. But there was no other authority in the island with whom he could lodge his complaints, as the priest himself was the only person who exercised the functions of a magistrate; and considering the opinions he, when remonstrated with, did not hesitate to express about the "rights of property," and the "goodness of Providence to poor men who had few means of gaining a living," it was not very probable that he would prove an over fastidious protector of whatever property the ocean might land on the shores of his parish.

"How can I help it, Captain," pleaded the priest, seeing that his other mode of argument only made Captain Roughhead more angry, "we have no police, and wid all my teachings about honesty being the best policy, and how their Holy Father, of whom I'm so poor and weak a representative, will punish the wicked, they help themselves, in spite of all I can say to them, to everything that comes from the sea, and is within their reach. I tell them that its thaving; I preach to them, and I pray wid them, but they won't belave me. More's the pity for their souls; but poor devils, and I am sorry to call any of my flock by that name, they have been taught



by their fathers and mothers to believe that as God rules the sea, everything that is cast on their poverty-stricken shores, where they are often starving, is sent by an act of Providence for their use."

#### STATE OF THE ISLAND.

We had already received some very convincing proofs that there was some reason for the priest's arguments on their behalf; I had never seen, and I have never since seen, such a state of destitution as prevailed in the village, or "clachan," where we had taken up our abode.

The village itself, though I believe the best then in the island, was of the most wretched description. Its inhabitants lived—I should rather say, half existed—in miserable huts, without windows, with a hole for an entrance, and another in the roof to allow the smoke from their peat fires to escape. In one space, I cannot call it a room or an apartment, they were huddled together, father, mother, and sons and daughters, of all ages; and contiguous to this space, and without any division worthy of the name, their cattle, and pigs, and animals of various kind, had a covering in the winter season. Indeed, the very manure was gathered together to preserve it from the rain and snow, and was housed in their wretched abodes, until required to spread in the

spring on their barren soil. As to the soil itself, it produced little beyond a few patches of oats where it had been possible to cultivate them, although in sheltered sandy spots potatoes could be raised, but nothing else, when the season proved favourable, and the land, such as it was, had been sufficiently manured. Everything else in the way of green crops were unknown. Where the rocks were not covered with sand drifted from the ocean, a few clumps of rank grass might be traced spreading itself from the neighbouring swamp over their rugged surface. Trees were unknown; stunted, leafless brushwood supplied their place, and where oaks of sturdy growth (but these were few and very far between) had resisted the frequent storms which swept over the island, they had been shorn of their branches, and were only dwarfish, mangled wrecks of what they should have been.

Here and there might be seen shallow lakes, or sluggish streams, with stagnant ponds and ditches reflecting the dismal blackness of the peat, so that they resembled pools or puddles of ink. The valleys were mostly bogs, and the hill sides were covered with granite boulders, between which a few cattle, as stunted as the trees, and some starved-looking sheep found precarious pasturage. Had it not been the case that these animals managed to exist, and

that a larger proportion of them than one could have supposed, even continued to thrive on the "bent," when assisted by a better description of grass which covered the tops of the highlands in spring time, the inhabitants would have had no means of earning a livelihood, except by fishing, when the weather permitted; but somehow or other, they did not prosecute that calling with a vigour necessary to command success. Nor did they seem to care about following other pursuits which might have been made lucrative to people in their poverty-stricken position, such as the capture of seals, to be found at times in abundance amongst the rocks and bays, by which the islands of the Hebrides were intersected and surrounded. Rabbits were plentiful; there were also a few moor fowl, woodcocks, and wild ducks, but the inhabitants had no fowling pieces, nor the means of obtaining them with the necessary ammunition, and if they had they were so indolently inclined that I question if they would have made a profitable use of them.

Their food, therefore, consisted almost entirely of oatmeal converted into porridge or cakes, potatoes, salt fish, milk, and shell fish of various kinds, gathered from the beach. Now and again they had a dish or joint of "boldie," or "brachish," the former being the mutton of sheep which had gone

mad with maggots on the brain or some other cause, and being unsaleable in the neighbouring markets, were penned up and fattened for the use of their owner's family and friends, or more likely slaughtered and sold to some passing vessel in urgent need of fresh provisions. But the "brachish" was even a more revolting description of animal food. It consisted of the carcasses of dead sheep which had sometimes lain unnoticed on the hill sides, or more frequently in the valleys and pools of stagnant water, for three weeks or a month. The time, however, the carcase had thus lain was not a matter of much consideration to the Hebridians. So long as the meat was not actually putrid, and could be dried and smoked over their peat fires, and thus preserved for winter use, and so long as the skins of the animals were sufficiently sound to be converted into floats for their fishing nets, a dead sheep was anything but a dead loss to them.

Nor were the inhabitants themselves in any way better provided with clothing than with food. Shoes, I might say, were almost unknown, and the stockings worn by the women were frequently footless, in many cases from choice. Their attire in other respects consisted of all sorts of odd adaptations. Originally it may have been of the usual home-spun coarse woollen stuff common to the district, but even that was so

thoroughly patched with odd pieces of different coloured cloths, sometimes with bits of silk and other finery, that it would have been difficult to conjecture the original materials. No doubt most of these patches of superior quality and manufacture consisted of waifs from the ocean; but, as most of their clothing was faded, worn, and very dirty, the different qualities and variegated colours were not glaringly perceptible; altogether the Hebridian women were as draggled and deplorable in their attire as the huts in which they lived were poor and wretched.

Nevertheless the women of Barra were stalwart, and even good-looking, and on the whole, fine specimens of the female sex. Most of the hard, and indeed all the menial, work was performed by them, the male sex preferring to fish, when the weather permitted, or to plant and dig the potatoes. Nor were the men more energetic in their more laborious and profitable pursuits; they appeared to relish idling and gossiping about their villages a great deal more, and pilfering from their neighbours when they had an opportunity, but, above all, their favourite occupation was to lounge about and watch a chance for the plunder of some unfortunate vessel which had been cast upon their inhospitable shores. They may have considered themselves to be of the better order of

our race, as most men do, but the men of Barra were much inferior to the women.

Most of these lounging, loafing fellows had a good haul from the wreck of the *Arethusa*, in spite of all the preachings and warnings of their priest; but, from what transpired, I suspect he not merely winked at their misdeeds, but helped himself, by private arrangement, to the lion's share.

As the gale continued to rage with unabated fury for two days after the *Arethusa* had been driven on shore, and as her hull had sustained very serious damage in bumping over the reef, the waves of the following flood tide had an easy work to perform in shaking the masts over her side, while the ensuing tide, an unusually high one, as easily completed her destruction.

Cargo and wreck were now alike driven on shore, and in spite of our skipper's exertions to preserve it, the cargo, somehow or other, was transferred in the course of the night, and even in broad daylight, to places difficult of discovery, and still more of recovery. Nor could he save those portions of the wreck of the vessel herself which could be conveniently removed. They were all, in the opinion of the wreckers, waifs of the ocean, and as such were the legitimate property of anyone who had strength to carry them away.

Although many of the casks of wine were stove in, it is surprising the number that were washed on shore in a sound state. Some of these were broached and their contents drunk on the spot, or carried away in buckets, cans, and other utensils; but in numerous instances the pipes were bodily removed and buried in some convenient spot until their contents could be transferred either to the cellars of the priest or the huts of the peasantry.

Every attempt to save any portion of the cargo proved, under the circumstances, altogether in vain; wine, dried fruit, and even the corkwood, disappeared in the course of the first week after they had been cast on shore, and considering that nearly the whole adults, out of a population somewhere about 2,000 inhabitants, belonging to the island were gathered around the spot ready to carry away, by night or day, whatever they could lay their hands upon, it is surprising that any portion of either the cargo or the removable portions of the wreck should have remained so long on the beach.

In the winter season there were then, if there are now, no regular means of communication between Barra and the mainland, or between it and the other islands, and, at that time, months frequently elapsed without any intercourse whatever, so that Captain Roughhead, however anxious to

save the cargo of his vessel for "the benefit of whom it might concern," was unable to communicate with the laird, or obtain assistance from the underwriters, or other legalised authorities.

To have attempted with his small crew, even when backed by his scattering blunderbuss and Conchie's pistols and cutlass, to protect any portions of the wreck beyond what he had secured for his own use and that of his crew, would have been futile. The Barra men were far too numerous for him to overcome, unsupported as he was by any officials or other trustworthy persons. As the wreckers carried on their operations by stealth, and produced so many arguments in favour of their "rights to all property cast on shore," any bold attempt to prevent plunder—everybody being a wrecker in Barra—might have placed his own life and the lives of his crew in jeopardy. Indeed, he had no course left, except to protest against their conduct, which he did in a document written by myself to his dictation; I recollect it was a curious composition, full of strong words, but although the priest, the only "authority" in the island, to whom it was addressed, read it with much gravity, he relieved his conscience by expressing his regret that he was powerless, and could only leave matters to take their *usual course*.

In justice to the inhabitants of Barra it must,



however, be added that we were kindly treated, and that every article in the shape of clothes and such like, including the provisions we had saved, were left in our undisputed possession. It was lucky for us that we had saved some provisions, or we might otherwise have been obliged to sustain existence as best we could on a scanty allowance of oatmeal and potatoes, "boldie" and "brachish."

More than a month elapsed from the time of our shipwreck ere the weather permitted us to leave Barra, and then we found a passage in a large fishing-boat to the mainland of Scotland.

Thus ended my cruise in the *Arethusa*, and my first, though far from my last, voyage to sea.



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